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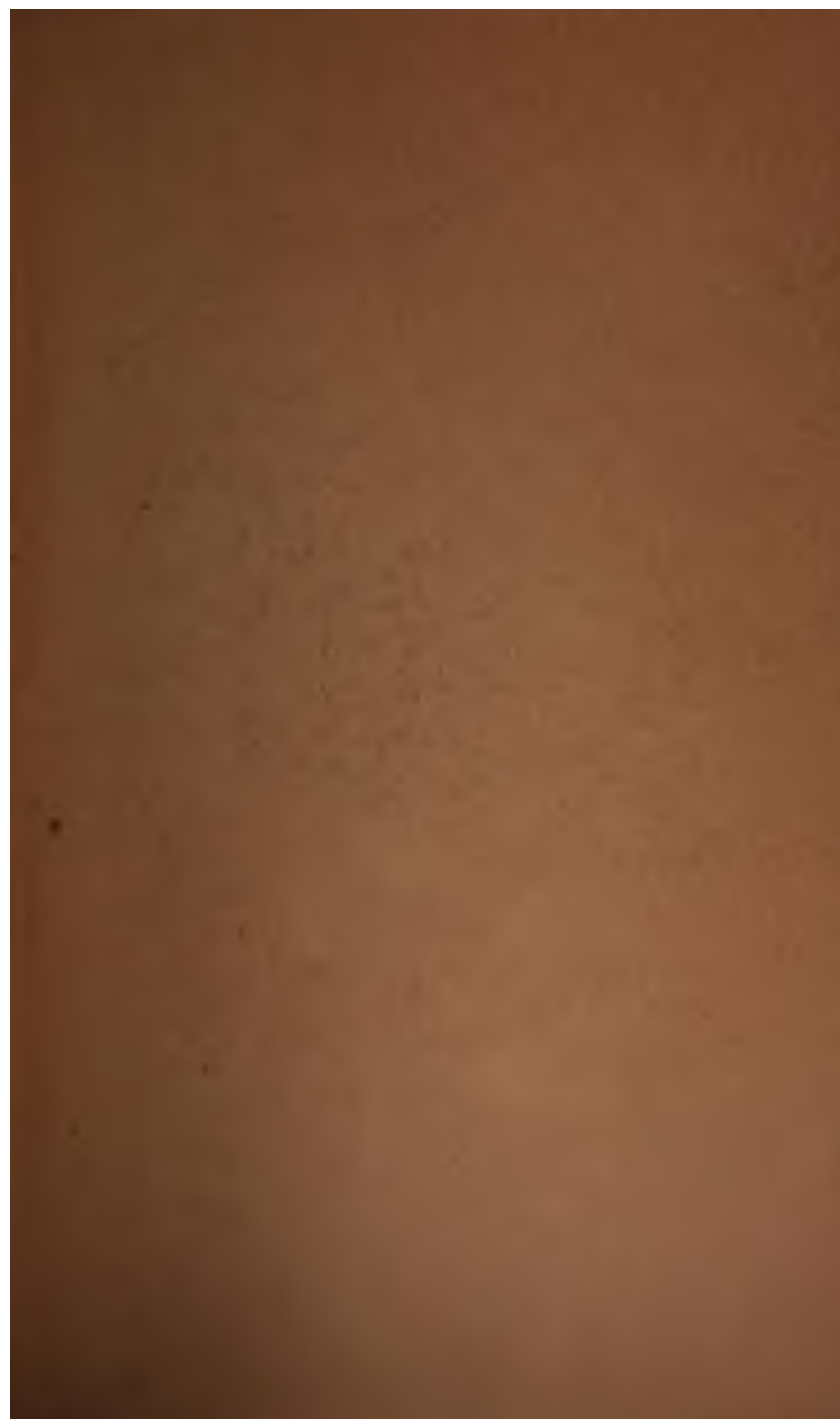
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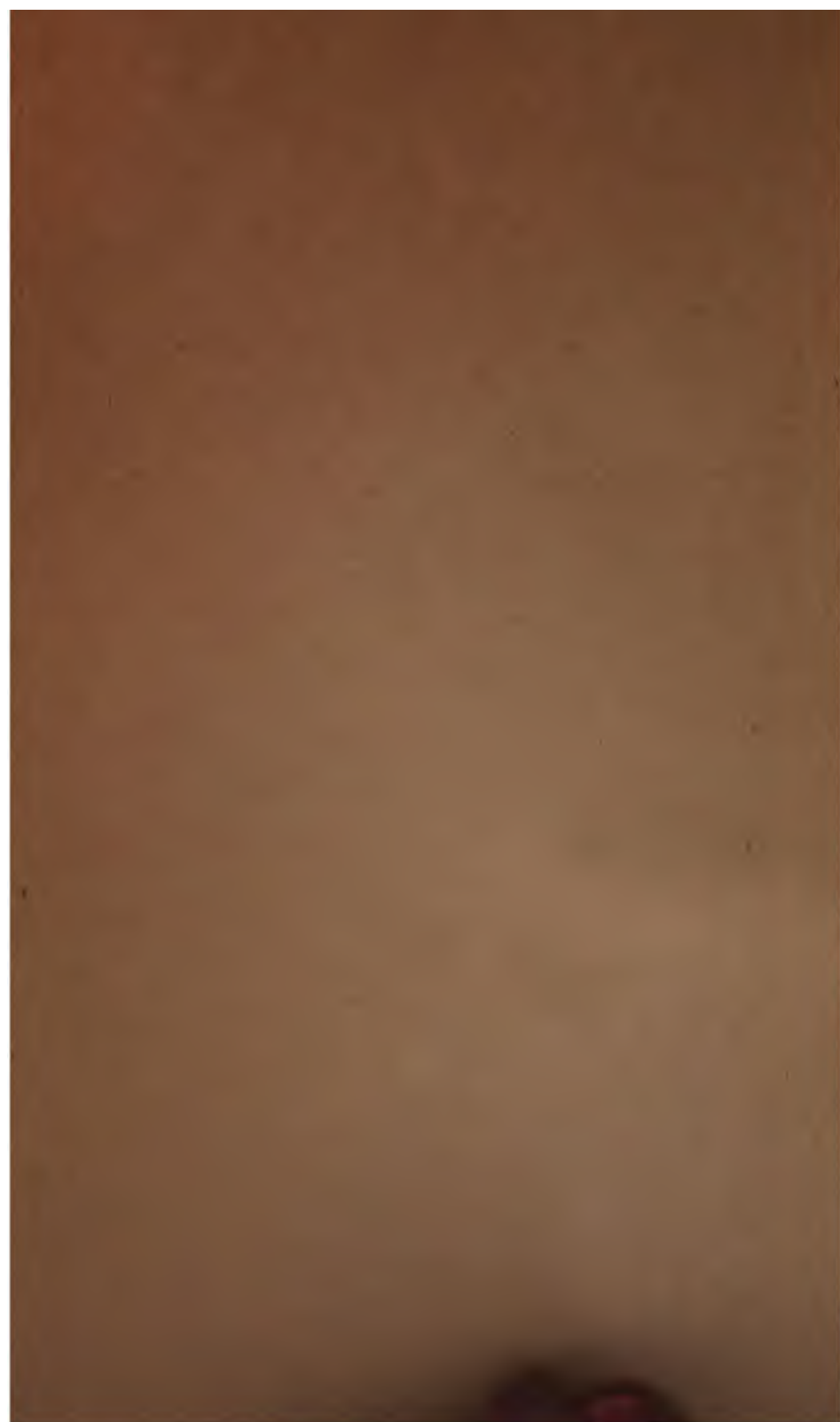
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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GERMANIC STUDIES  
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THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE  
IN GERMAN LITERATURE

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# THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE IN GERMAN LITERATURE

**BY**

EDWIN HERMANN ZEYDEL, P.H.D.

INSTRUCTOR IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



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CALVIN THOMAS.

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## PREFACE

The subject of this monograph was suggested to me some two years ago by Professor Calvin Thomas while I was a graduate student at Columbia University. Originally the study was to be entitled *Literary Satire at the Expense of the Holy Roman Empire*, but in the course of the work it was found advisable to adopt the present broader, more euphonious title. This change, important as it may seem at first blush, is after all of minor significance, for the very nature of the subject tends to encourage an unfavorable, satirical attitude. Not only does this attitude gradually become predominant as time goes on, but it is also the most interesting angle from which the Holy Roman Empire could be considered.

In the field of literary criticism two distinct types of subject-matter may be distinguished, viz., the intensive and the extensive, the former dealing in minute detail with some single phase of a given writer or group of writers, the latter treating synoptically a given phenomenon extending over a longer period of time. That works of the latter class, to which the present monograph belongs, cannot within reasonable scope achieve any great degree of completeness in the presentation of pertinent matter is quite apparent. I have therefore endeavored to offer only such material as seemed of intrinsic value.

It is a privilege to acknowledge my great obligations to Professor Thomas for suggesting the subject, and for the aid and inspiration which he gave me not only while I was engaged in the present work, but during the entire five years that I have known him. I am also indebted to Professors W. A. Hervey, Arthur F. J. Remy and F. W. J. Heuser for valuable suggestions and to Professor John Bassett Moore for giving me access to some rare and valuable old books of his private library, which were useful to me in the course of my work.



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## CHAPTER F

### INTRODUCTORY: SOME HISTORICAL DATA

Whether the Holy Roman Empire, which was called into existence by the memorable imperial coronation of the Carolingian ruler Charles, afterwards known as the Great, an act performed by Pope Leo III. at Rome on Christmas day of the year 800, was a blessing to the world in general and to Germany in particular, may hardly be called a moot question. For altho both sides of the controversy have been well presented by many historians, scholars are in the final analysis rather inclined to ascribe more evil than good to the venerable structure. And whereas fully one hundred years have now passed since the Austrian emperor, Francis II., actuated rather by political stress than by lack of veneration, dissolved the tottering Empire that had long since outlived its usefulness, we may safely infer that history has by this time pronounced its final decision in the matter.

In its best days, i. e., under Charles the Great and again under Otto the Great, then under Henry III. (1039-1056), when it reached the height of its power, and a century later under Frederick I. of Hohenstaufen (Friedrich Barbarossa, 1152-1189) the Holy Roman Empire was far more than a mere state. It was a great and powerful institution built around a wonderful system of ideas, as Bryce says (p. 2): the "most signal instance of the fusion of Roman and Teutonic elements in modern civilization," and as Lamprecht puts it:<sup>1</sup> *eine der genialsten politischen Bauten, die die Geschichte Europas überhaupt gesehen hat*. Our purpose in the present introductory chapter is to study it as such, after having given some attention to the conditions out of which it grew, and to ex-

<sup>1</sup>In *Beilage* to Vol. XLII. (Jan.-Mar., 1915) of *Oesterreichische Rundschau*.

amine its gradual decline, until in the eighteenth century it became the laughing stock of all, for example, of the Frenchman Voltaire,<sup>2</sup> and "a favorite theme for satire."<sup>3</sup> Preceded by an historical survey of this kind an investigation of the attitude of poets and men of letters toward the Empire in successive generations will perhaps be more intelligible.

We shall have to go considerably farther back than the year 800 A.D. in order to gather in the many threads of the woof that became in time the Romano-Germanic Empire. For altho a direct connection cannot be established between the later empire and the earlier Roman state founded by Augustus, many points of contact exist.<sup>4</sup> The rulers of the old Roman Empire, for example, strove for, and attained, gradually increasing power, until Septimius Severus (193-211) became the sole source and center of political authority. His successor, Caracalla, gradually broadened the compass of Roman citizenship by granting it to all natives of the Roman world, while Diocletian (284-305) endeavored to invest the person of the sovereign with more sanctity and to cast about him an added lustre. Constantine (306-337) in his turn recognized Christianity as a lawful religion (313) and ultimately became a proselyte himself, in this way laying a firm foundation for the union of Church and state. The alliance thus begun is one of far-reaching importance for all subsequent history; it marks the rise of spiritual power and revives the conception of an all-embracing, universal Roman people.

The old Empire gradually wasted away, but its heritage survived and flourished on other soil. Not to the East was it taken, the home of a growing Oriental despotism, but to the North, the land of unspoiled, malleable barbarians. And necessity was the author of the transplantation. When in 741 Pope Gregory III. felt hard pressed by the Eastern Emperor on one side and the Lombards on the other, he turned to

<sup>2</sup> His witticism to the effect that it was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor Empire is well known.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin Thomas, *Faust*, Vol. I., p. 302 (Boston, 1897).

<sup>4</sup> The main authorities used in the following account are Bryce, Giesebrecht, and Lamprecht: *Deutsche Geschichte*.

Charles Martel for aid. Circumstances prevented a response at the time, but the precedent, which in truth had been established as early as under Gregory II., was well remembered in the Frankish mayoral family. All expectations of the latter were met; the impotent Merovingian, Childeric, was sent packing and Pippin appeared in his place, possessed of far greater power and much prestige. Pope Leo III. followed in the footsteps of his predecessors in his devotion to the Frankish rulers, and when he crowned Charles at St. Peter's with the diadem of the Cæsars, he rekindled in the minds of men the smouldering conception of a great Roman Empire as a necessary part of a well ordered world. Cordial relations between the Eastern Emperors and the Popes had long before ceased to exist; the great Frank proved to be an able successor, indeed, of the former rulers and soon enjoyed full temporal authority, which found its complement in the spiritual power of the Holy Father.

Eginhard, the biographer of Charles, alleges that the king was very loath to accept the Roman crown from Leo,<sup>5</sup> suspecting no doubt the legality of the offer, and foreseeing possible complications with the Eastern line of Emperors. That no difficulties arose was due in some degree at least to the apathy of the Eastern court, for the latter readily agreed to negotiations whereby Charles was recognized as Emperor and ruler of northern Italy, with the exception of Venice. Later, in 1453, the Turks captured Constantinople and were long considered the most formidable foe of the Empire. Still their rulers were officially recognized by the Western Emperors.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Vita Caroli*, Chap. 38.

<sup>6</sup> In this connection it is of interest to examine the titles exchanged in official correspondence of the Roman Emperor and the Turkish Sultan. According to Dumont and Rousset's *Le Cereemoniel Diplomatique* in the *Supplement au Corps Universel Diplomatique*, Vol. V., p. 726, the Sultan usually writes *Chief of Christianity* or *Most glorious among the Christian princes*, while the Emperor writes *Emperor of the Ottomans and sovereign in Asia, in Greece, and in the Orient*. In 1606 it was mutually agreed by the Treaty of Torock (art. II.) between Rudolf II. and Achmet I. that in the future they would not use the title of *King* in addressing one another, but would substitute *Emperor*. In the Treaty of Carlowitz (1699)



Altho Charles was nominally Roman Emperor, his government was decidedly Germanic in character. It bore the impress of his own great personality, his vigor, his genius. Still the difficulties which were destined to confront his remote successors made themselves felt even in his day: the hindering, obstructing, ecclesiastical power of the Pope, which at best was incompatible with imperial projects of any kind, and the diversity and discordance of the various members of the vast Empire. For thruout the entire so-called Middle Ages two diametrically opposite theories struggled with alternate success for supremacy, viz., that of disorder and anarchic confusion and that of a harmonious and universal system of government, combining spiritual and temporal power. It was this battle against the forces of evil from which the successful, powerful Emperors, such as Charles the Great and Frederick I. emerged victorious, but in which the less gifted great majority foundered, as it were. In short, the Holy Roman Empire contained in its very nature the symptoms of the festering wound to which it later succumbed.

In more than one sense of the word the direct results of Charlemagne's work were shortlived and Otto the Great became the second founder of the Empire. Bryce goes so far as to call the Holy Roman Empire, in the later significance of the term, i. e., the sovereignty of Germany and Italy vested in a Germanic prince, a creation of Otto (p. 80). But altho Otto's coronation was greeted by contemporaries as a boon for Germany, most modern historians argue that he sacrificed his country to his inordinate ambition, that he neglected his own kingdom for a dream of world dominion. His case, however, was destined to be far from unique in the annals of the Empire. History furnishes all too many examples of unscrupulous Popes who lured vainglorious Germanic kings into their entangling meshes. As errors oft repeated are soon moulded

the Turkish plenipotentiaries addressed the Emperor *Caesarea et Romanorum Imperatoria Majestas*, while the imperial delegates referred to the Sultan as *Imperialis Ottomanica Majestas*. In the Treaty of Passarowitz we read: *Majestas Augustissimi et Potentissimi Romanorum Imperatoris* and *Majestas Serenissimi et Potentissimi Ottomanorum Imperatoris*.

into habits, the unnatural alliance between Pope and Emperor in time came to be considered both natural and necessary. Thruout the Middle Ages, then, we have the curious idea expressed that the Empire has its foundations in the very essence of things, a delusion which the era of the Renascence alone was able to dispel. This mental attitude of the times, suffused as it was with conceptions of World Monarchy and World Religion, saw in the new religion of Christianity a holy, all-including empire of the spirit, eternal in its structure, and inextricably interwoven with this, a universal temporal dominion, also eternal. It followed axiomatically that the union of the two elements should be eternal, too.<sup>7</sup>

The doctrine of the indivisibility of the Empire in its spiritual and temporal aspects, of the complete harmony of ecclesiastical and imperial powers, soon revealed its impracticability, for it is doubtful if at any time after the death of Henry III. (1056) an instance of such unity can be found. In the sequel the Popes became haughtier and either demanded unconditional obedience on the part of the civil government or sought to arrogate to themselves the entire power. The Emperors, on the other hand, occupied a singular position. At first blush it would seem that their authority and jurisdiction were unlimited, but such was hardly ever the case. True, they surpassed all others in dignity, but their suzerainty was peculiarly indefinite and different in its nature from that of other sovereigns. Acting as a link that nominally joined the other rulers in a bond of unity, the imperial crown stood aloof with its unlimited prerogatives, which, however, usually carried with them not a vestige of real authority. Later, when nations began to develop, the Emperors could have boasted even of

<sup>7</sup> The doctrine of the eternity of the Empire appears in many imperial documents. For instance, an agreement made by Emperor Maximilian between Rüdiger, abbot of Weissenburg, and the Burgomaster and council of that city on October 2, 1518, reads: *Und damit angezeigter Vertrag in allen seinen Punkten und Artikeln dem gemeinen Mann desto bass in Würden und Gedächtnüss bleiben und gehalten werden / so ordnen und setzen Wir / dass hinführo in Ewigkeit solcher unser Vertrag alle Jahr . . . verlesen / und in den gemelten Eyd ausgedruckt gesetzt werden solle.* Dumont, *Corps univ. dipl.*, IV., 1, p. 265. Cf. *infra* Appendix A.

international power, or rather prestige. But a vain boast it would have been, the boast of a visionary. The rise of nations, in truth, was one of the first premonitions of the inner collapse of the Empire.

Referring to the fact that the early Roman Emperors usually possessed the title of German king even before the imperial coronation, Bryce says (p. 121): "The union in one person of two characters, a union at first personal, then official, and which became at last a fusion of the two characters into something different from what either had been, is the key to the whole subsequent history of Germany and the Empire." The Emperor-King was indeed a peculiar monstrosity, who represented in his two titles a host of conflicting and contradictory theories. One thing, however, is certain. He was always more of a German Emperor than a *Romanorum Imperator* or *Römischer Kaiser*, altho the prestige of this shadowy title usually stood him in good stead. Neither in Rome nor in Italy at large did the Emperors ever gain a firm footing. The gradually increasing power of the Popes was, of course, a serious obstacle, especially to the less tractable sovereigns, who were constantly made to feel the dependence of their position and the usufructuary nature of their power. Frequent interregna, finally, not to mention such spectacles as the humiliation of Henry IV. at Canossa (1077), made matters worse for them. It is clear, then, that the more powerful the Popes waxed, the greater was the disadvantage of the Emperors. By well meant reforms with which the latter often assisted the papal cause they unconsciously wrought their own ruin.

Of course it would be wrong to assume that the Pope invariably worsted his colleague in every rencontre. Henry III., for instance, ruled with an iron hand, and Henry V. half a century later tried diligently to emulate him in this respect. But fifty years had thrown much weight into the papal balance and the later Henry could boast of but a scanty victory over Paschal II. in the Concordat of Worms (1122), while the Pope himself observed with glee how the ground was slowly slipping from beneath his adversary. As was to be expected, the

people of Germany usually stood by their Emperor in the many struggles against ecclesiasticism and slowly learned to hate the Italian miasma. But at the same time they began to envisage a new principle, to wit, that the essential, authoritative element in the Empire was after all the great body of princes and barons and not the Emperor himself. The thirteenth century had hardly been ushered in; already the most sacred, the most cherished principles and doctrines on which the supposedly eternal Empire had been constructed were falling hopelessly by the wayside.

The increasing power and influence of the nominally dependent princes, which gradually flowered forth into the important prerogative of electing the highest temporal lord in Christendom, soon made themselves felt very markedly. As early as 1156 the *Principes Electores* are mentioned,<sup>8</sup> apparently as a recognized, authoritative body. The *Sachsenspiegel* (1230), however, is clearer on the subject, naming six constituent members and rejecting a seventh, the King of Bohemia, as un-German. Other early sources also touch upon the complicated and confused subject and contain variant versions which will be considered presently. In theory, no doubt, all the freemen of the Empire originally comprised the electoral body. Their rights, in turn, were delegated to certain princes and rulers, who by a peculiar, gradual accretion of prestige attained absolute and independent power and slowly widened their nominative privileges into electoral rights. The germ of the later electoral college lies in the so-called process of praetaxation, or deliberation of the nominating body for the purpose of choosing one candidate from among many, a method which was followed as early as 1024 at the election of Conrad II. Hereupon followed the declaration on the part of the princes of their choice for king, the formal *Electio* or *Kur*, which was succeeded finally by the approval of the petty nobility. As to the exact manner of procedure in regard to details, method of voting, etc., much freedom was at first left to the contracting parties. The document which became fundamental

<sup>8</sup> Pertz, *M. G. H. legg.*, II.

imperial law, the Golden Bull of Charles IV. (1356), settled many moot questions in this respect and became an instrument of far-reaching importance for later generations. But when subsequently the Electors became absolutely supreme, even the Golden Bull remained nothing more than a fatuous, operose edict.

The early German rulers took care not to assume the title of Emperor before the formal coronation by the Pope. So the Saxon Emperors previous to the anointment were simply *reges Francorum Orientalium* or *Francorum atque Saxonum reges*, while after the coronation they were legally entitled to the designation *Imperator Augustus*. To this was added later (probably by Otto III., possibly even earlier) the more specific *Romanorum*. The less obvious term *Rex Romanorum* was assumed first by Henry II. for reasons similar to those which had prompted former rulers to avoid the appellation of Emperor before the official sanction of the Pope. The second Henry, however, eager to show in some way the intimate relation between his native German crown and the honor of universal imperial sovereignty, emanating from Rome and the Church, brought the new title into use, which from the days of Henry IV. became quite customary. By virtue of a bull of Pope Julius II., Maximilian I., denied a passage to Rome by Venice in 1508, was granted the title *Imperator Electus* (*cr-wählter Kaiser*), which from Ferdinand I. on became the official imperial title directly after the royal coronation in Germany, altho after Frederick III. (1440-1493) not a single Emperor was again crowned in Rome by a Pope, and with the exception of Charles V., not a single one was crowned at all by a Pope in Italy. Nor was the very useful and sane practise, which made the imperial crown elective by its very nature, observed with any degree of fidelity. Beginning with Albert II. (1438) the honor remained, with only two unimportant exceptions (Charles VII. and Francis I.), in one family, the famous House of Hapsburg, founded even earlier than the time of Albert II., by Rudolf I. (1273). The result was that the heir-apparent was frequently and without compunction in-

vested with the title of *Romanorum Rex*, while his predecessor, the testator, still enjoyed the best of health. This clearly bewrays the gradual degeneration of the Empire, a degeneration which once begun on a large scale, slowly but surely ruined the once splendid structure!

In more than one instance an Emperor possessed as many as four distinct crowns, without regard to his minor titles, which when cited often exceed the limits of a folio column in Dumont's *Corps Diplomatique*. He was first King of Germany, i. e., in later times King of the Romans, and received this honor at Aachen, until after the time of Ferdinand I., when the election and coronation were usually held at Frankfurt, rarely at Regensburg. After Otto the Great every Emperor was invested with the insignia of this office. In the second place the Emperor received the imperial crown, a token of temporal world dominion, the historical development of which was described in the previous paragraph. The third title, that of King of Italy or of the Lombards, given at Monza, Milan or Pavia, was borne by almost every ruler who took the Roman imperial crown, down to Frederick III., when the practise was discontinued, except in the case of Charles V. Finally, four emperors received the Burgundian crown at Arles. From the time of Ferdinand I. the so-called *Wahlkapitulation* was prescribed for the Emperors, according to which they pledged themselves to make a diligent attempt to obtain the imperial insignia with all possible promptitude. But since not a single one of the subsequent rulers, Ferdinand I. included, was actually crowned at Rome, this pledge, like much else in the history of the later Empire, was meaningless. Later, in 1658, at the coronation of Leopold I., as well as in the case of all his successors, the phrase was at last modified. Mere superficial changes in legal documents, however, could no longer save the Empire from the fate of obsolescence. Absurdities developed in endless array, and what had once been fact soon degenerated into mere vacuous form. German rulers termed themselves Roman Emperors simply because their predecessors had possessed certain prerogatives, burying themselves with obstinate blindness in the glory that had been.

James Bryce, confirmed by other historians, believes that logically the Empire should have died with the Hohenstaufens at the time of the Great Interregnum. It had fulfilled its mission on earth, as far as that could be possible. Charles the Great, blessed with unrivalled power and resources, Otto the Great, a typically Germanic prince possessed of a smaller but firmer, more compact realm, and his successors for a period of over three hundred years, were on the whole all of them earnest, diligent rulers, strongly conscious of the importance of their trust. They had tried gallantly to maintain a position which in the final analysis was untenable. For a while they succeeded, altho ultimate failure was inevitable. Failure, however, is not always to be condemned, provided that it impresses its useful lesson upon succeeding generations. Such was unfortunately not the case in Germany, for the torpid, retrogressive Empire continued to exist for nearly five and a half centuries, decaying gradually at the core, until it became a mass of putridity, one of the most colossal jokes and striking paradoxes in all history.

The reasons for this obstinate adherence to old forms are easily intelligible. They are to be found in the seductive ambitions, the megalomania of a people who had been led to consider their national monarch a universal temporal sovereign whose well founded pretensions honored and exalted his own nation above all others. Hence ruler after ruler succumbed to the temptation, at times benefiting himself, but occasionally, too, heaping privations on his own head, yet surely working ruin for the future of his country. And what was a custom immemorial became a religious belief, as it were, a conviction that the German kingdom and *das Heilige Römische Reich deutscher Nation* were one. The latter name, more sonorous and beautiful than gravid in meaning, came to stand for a great sacred ideal, the most priceless possession of the nation. It was, indeed, a name to conjure with!

A circumstance which contributed largely to the attrition of the Emperor's power during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the condition of fealty which many of his

subjects enjoyed. Nobles and petty tyrants in countless numbers, not to mention the mightier rulers, boasted of the fact that they held their fiefs only from God and the Emperor, meaning thereby practically that they recognized no master at all. For the Emperor could but rarely, and then only when conditions made it imperative, give his attention to these unscrupulous robber barons. He was either busied elsewhere or lacked the requisite resources to impress his power upon them. The Electors, too, were as a rule but little solicitous of the imperial welfare, in fact, they were usually self-centered enough to elect a candidate who could with ease be swayed and influenced in their own interests. The cities, natural allies of the Emperor, could not be depended on by him for support, since feudalism still held the field. Financially the Empire was abjectly poor, for the sources of imperial income had been squandered. The result was that other sources of revenue, often unworthy and disgraceful, were sought. Patritius, the secretary of Frederick III., is quoted by Bryce<sup>9</sup> as having said that the imperial income was hardly sufficient to defray the expenses of official embassies; Maximilian himself complained about the financial situation, and Sigismund once exclaimed to the Diet that the Empire was the most despoiled and poverty-stricken organization imaginable, so that he who ventured to accept its hegemony without possessing a private fortune was devoting himself to slavery and not to empire.<sup>10</sup> Other pertinent statements, equally significant, are quoted. And if the leaders, the rulers themselves, were compelled to express themselves in such terms, it was little wonder that their subjects, who felt the stress in a different and more drastic way, should often have used even stronger and more pointed language.

To return to the difficult problem of the Electors. We have noticed that the *Sachsenspiegel* rejected the King of Bohemia from the electoral college, thus leaving six members, the three Rhenish archbishops, the Palsgrave of the Rhine, the Duke of the Saxons and the Margrave of Brandenburg. A letter of

<sup>9</sup> From Moser's *Römische Kayser*.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Bryce, p. 233.



Pope Urban in 1264 clearly specifies seven members, adding to the above the Bavarian Duke, and allotting the four great imperial household offices to the four temporal Electors, headed by the Duke of Saxony as Arch Marshal. Presently a quarrel arose because of a preponderating influence in the college of the House of Wittelsbach, which controlled both the County Palatine and the Bavarian duchy. Bohemia and Bavaria, too, were at swords' points on the question of relative rights to a seat in the college. Various tentative arrangements were made, all of them, however, with the object of restricting membership permanently to seven; the final decision, too, rendered by the Golden Bull (1356), which granted the seat to Bohemia, was of the same tenor. In other words, the number seven contained a sort of unexplained mysticism, doubtless involving superstition. Yet this also was broken. Early in the Thirty Years' War Ferdinand II. had confiscated the electoral vote of the Count Palatine and granted it to the Bavarian line, while at the Peace of Westphalia the former was reinstated as eighth member under condition that should the Bavarian house disappear, the electorate would revert to the Palgrave. In 1692, finally, Emperor Leopold I. granted a ninth vote to the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg. The electoral body, then, which at its very inchoation was the result of an error that confused the German kingdom with the Roman Empire and later usurped the prerogative of the Pope at Rome, also followed the general tendency of degeneration, which held the entire imperial fabric in its grip.

Ideal Emperors, who embodied in one person all the logical prerequisites of their office, were indeed few in number. If it was difficult for most of them to preserve peace in their entire realm and to be the fountain head from which righteousness and law emanate, it was well nigh impossible for them to bring the weight of spiritual unity to bear on their subjects. And what made matters still worse and perplexing for the Emperors thruout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries especially was the fact that the Popes themselves practically repudiated the theory of coextension of ecclesiastical and secular power,

resenting any interference in their affairs on the part of the temporal sovereigns. Originally the Emperor, as secular lord of Christendom, was the head of the entire system of knight-hood and could even make and unmake kings at will. The proud words which in the year 1303 Boniface VIII. pronounced about him, the *Imperatorem et monarcham omnium regum et principum terrenorum*, to whom even the Gallic king is and should be subservient,<sup>11</sup> and the frank confession of Alfonso, King of Naples: *Nos reges omnes debemus reverentiam Imperatori, tamquam summo regi, qui est Caput et Dux regum*,<sup>12</sup> still adhere faithfully to the older ideal. It is a striking fact, too, that many of the champions of the Renaissance were friendly to the Empire, a phenomenon that may be explained chiefly on grounds of common hostility to the Pope. Petrarch and Dante both agree in this sentiment, the latter, especially, showing imperial tendencies thruout the entire *Purgatorio* and in the *De Monarchia*.<sup>13</sup> The jurists of the time, also, are imperialists. However, in spite of the praise and enthusiasm of the theorists and visionaries, the Empire constantly sank lower. In the reign of Sigismund (1410-1438) we have the last instance of a general council, that of Constance, and the last occasion on which an Emperor exercised his function as an international figure. He sank presently to the position of a mere German monarch.

Materially, too, the Empire declined. Poland had been lost at the time of the Great Interregnum, West Prussia fell away, Bohemia became practically independent, Switzerland was recognized by Maximilian in 1500 as virtually autonomous, Burgundy was lost, and Italy passed entirely out of imperial jurisdiction. The Italian claims of the Emperors were relinquished only with the greatest reluctance. Dante constantly looked to Germany to relieve the political situation in northern Italy and this phantom hope of the imperialists did actually continue to exist for a long time. Other more clear-sighted

<sup>11</sup> Vid. Pfeffinger, *Corp. iur. publ.*, I., 377.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 379.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Bryce, p. 271 et passim.

writers, as for example, Matthew Villani, knew better.<sup>14</sup> The nature of the Emperors, too, tended toward localization and assertion of nationalistic aims. For the later Hapsburg rulers, altho in some cases very powerful and influential, did little to strengthen the Holy Roman Empire as such. Under them it rather became narrower in its character, tending unmistakably toward Austrian nationalism. Maximilian, for instance, was a typical Archduke of Austria, who like his successors used the ancient traditions chiefly for the purpose of linking and holding together the discordant parts of his realm.

As far as actual political influence is concerned, the Renaissance was a movement of minor importance. Nevertheless it was instrumental in sweeping many an antiquated theory from the boards, among them the old-fashioned claims of the Empire. Not by any single, concerted act was this effected, but by a gradual infiltration of new ideas. Seemingly insignificant events, such as the introduction of the phrase *Deutscher Nation* into the imperial title, played an important rôle in reducing the Empire to a narrower but more practicable basis. The Reformation, on the other hand, was a factor of more immediate importance, a deathblow, as it were, to the imperial idea. Overthrowing, as it did, the very principle of the formal unity of the Church and erecting the standard of civil as well as religious liberty, the Reformation placed the Emperor in an incongruous position. To a part of his subjects, the Catholics, he was still the champion of the Church, but to the Protestants he was simply the nominal head of the nation. Consider the matter as one may, thru the Reformation he practically lost one half of his subjects, who, as Bryce well puts it (p. 385): "cherished again the feeling with which their ancestors had resisted Julius Cæsar and Germanicus." Imperial plans of restoring religious uniformity by violence failed; the land was rent asunder by an irreconcilable quarrel; not even an impartial mediator could be found to restore order.

The unfortunate Thirty Years' War brought no blessings in

<sup>14</sup> Speaking of the possibility of the Emperors' continuing to rule Italy he says, IV., 77: *non lo fanno e non lo possono fare.*

its aftermath for anyone concerned. If it wrought any benefits at all, it proved that Emperor, Princes, Catholics and Protestants were mutually dependent on one another, more so than ever before. It furthermore deprived both the Empire and its head of the last vestige of superstitious reverence which had still clung to them. Both had been attacked before, now by a Pope, now by a publicist. But the seventeenth century bred a new type of critic, the Protestant jurist, whose forceful, bitter periods rendered all previous attacks feeble and jejune. These writers were the first to scoff at the Roman heritage of mere German kings and to point to the real functions of the latter. Two of the most noted, among them the jurist Chemnitz, or as he called himself Hippolytus a Lapide, and Pufendorf will be examined more closely in a later chapter.

By the Peace of Westphalia the hitherto insignificant imperial Diet was given a new lease of life, while the Aulic Council, the spoiled child of the Emperor, was restricted. Privileges and rights hitherto in the hands of the sovereign were delegated to the Diet. Moreover, non-Catholics were released from the jurisdiction of the Pope and the kings of France and Sweden were granted authority to interfere at will in imperial elections. Henceforth we are dealing no longer with a Roman, nor with a Romano-Germanic Empire, but with a structure of distinctly Germanic basis, a German aristocratic federation. In more than one sense it has hereafter no history at all. It simply continued for a while longer to lead a miserable, meaningless existence because its patient, slow-moving subjects lacked the initiative and in many cases the intelligence to effect its actual dissolution. It had now lost every conceivable virtue and all *raison d'être*. The Emperor, glorying only in empty sounding titles, lived in abject poverty and in order to be kept from doing harm, was kept from doing anything at all, as Dohm said, quoted by Bryce (p. 400) from Häusser's *Deutsche Geschichte*. The *Kammergericht* continued to meet, first at Speyer, later at Wetzlar, and became famous for its incredible dilatoriness and formalism and for its record of 60,000 undecided cases in 1806. As much may

be said of the Imperial Diet, which convened at Regensburg, attended by thirty ridiculously pedantic diplomatists, who did worse than waste their time. Emperor Francis II. performed a noble deed in relinquishing his Roman imperial rights, but his contemporaries were so little conscious even of the existence of a Holy Roman Empire that his resignation on August 6, 1806, passed by almost unnoticed.

Speaking broadly, we may say that ever since the middle of the eleventh century, from the time of Henry III., when the Empire reached the zenith of its power, every important event tended to loosen the cohesion of the structure. The growth of nationalism, the upas of feudalism, and the strengthening idea of popular freedom at the dawning of a new, modern era in the sixteenth century made its existence impossible. Furthermore the establishment of the Kingdom of Prussia in 1701 added new impetus to the evermore accelerating centrifugal forces. The grand climax, the Seven Years' War, in which Prussia resisted Austria, was then merely an inevitable consequence.

Since the present chapter is intended merely to present a survey of some salient historical facts regarding the rise and fall of the Empire, with a view to making more intelligible the discussion that is to follow, a detailed study of conditions in any one particular period, as for instance the eighteenth century, is postponed until later. Suffice it at present to note that we have examined both the virtues of the structure, thus enabling ourselves to appreciate any favorable criticism that literature may offer us, and also its many vices. On the latter we have dwelt with emphasis, since they offer us the key to the satirical literature on the Empire, which presents by far the more important and interesting aspect of our subject. One other phase of the question, patent and already suggested above, might with profit be discussed at present, viz., the baleful effect of the Empire on the political progress of Germany. Consciously or unconsciously the subject was in the mind of almost every writer who criticized the Empire, and in many cases, no doubt, helped to determine his attitude. It may con-

veniently be approached by a study of the development of national consciousness.<sup>15</sup>

There seems to be considerable difference of opinion on the question of early German patriotism. The historian Giesebrecht, for example, in his *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit*<sup>16</sup> finds patriotism quite general thruout Germany from the rise of the Saxon dynasty to the fall of the Hohenstaufens. Lamprecht, however, probably with justification, throws doubt on the truth of such a statement.<sup>17</sup> He shows above all that a belief in the importance of national consciousness together with its concomitant, national pride, is of comparatively recent growth. Racial and tribal consciousness supplanted it in earliest times. In Germany the predominance of the Franks was a deciding factor, until the period from the ninth to the eleventh centuries gradually built up a perceptible feeling of difference between Germans on the one hand and foreigners on the other. National consciousness in a political sense, however, was still non-existent, because the seemingly greater, worthier ideal of a Roman World-Empire absorbed it.

In examining with Carruth<sup>18</sup> the more important authors of the period, we find that under the Saxon dynasty Ruotger's *Life of Bruno* (966 or 967) shows germs of national consciousness, while Widukind of Corvey<sup>19</sup> represents a narrow Saxon point of view, and Liudprand, bishop of Cremona, is a staunch supporter of Otto the Great. Hrotswith of Gandersheim, too, is a frank admirer of the Saxon rulers, but regards the imperial Roman title as more exalted than that of German king. Bruno of Querfurt (1004) gives evidence of national patriotism, while Thietmar of Merseburg (1018) makes repeated reference to the *patria* and to the *regnum nostrum*<sup>20</sup> and calls

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Carruth in Vol. II. of *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*.

<sup>16</sup> Vol. I., pp. 215-216, but especially pp. 294-295. Giesebrecht is very optimistic in this respect.

<sup>17</sup> In his chapter entitled: *Geschichte des deutschen Nationalbewusstseins*, pp. 3-26 of Vol. I. of his *Deutsche Geschichte*.

<sup>18</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> *Res Gest. Sax.*, 967.

<sup>20</sup> Introduction to Book I. of *Chron.* in *M. G. SS.*, p. 733.

Germans *Teutonici* in contradistinction to non-Germans. Under the Salian dynasty<sup>21</sup> Berthold's *Annals* (1080) contain the first unequivocal mention of the German fatherland, and Walram of Naumburg in his *De Unitate Ecclesiae Conservanda*, 1092, is conscious of the sad state of political dismemberment because of the conflict between the Pope and the Emperor. During the time of the Hohenstaufens more genuine literature of value was produced, but it is characteristic that the greatest works of the period, as the *Nibelungenlied*, the *Gudrunlied*, the writings of Hartmann von Aue, Gottfried von Strassburg and Wolfram von Eschenbach lack almost all conscious love of fatherland. Men of lesser importance, such as Otto of St. Blasien, who is "arrogantly patriotic,"<sup>22</sup> hardly make up for the deficiency. Walther von der Vogelweide<sup>23</sup> takes a somewhat different stand. He is a friend of the Empire in his ideals and possesses a strong sense of personal allegiance to the crown, altho this may be conditioned in part at least by adulation. Undoubtedly he cherishes love for his country and a vivid feeling for the necessity of unity. Yet even his national pride is rooted primarily in a proud feeling of superiority of German court life and chivalry over similar customs in other lands. Modern patriotism was unknown to him.

If we trace the subject farther down in its historical development we find that with the decline of chivalry, national consciousness, such as exists, turns slowly to the citizen class and the rising municipalities and finds its best expression in the Hanseatic league. But the seductive splendor of the imperial crown, of the Empire, altho as early as the thirteenth century threatening to fall to pieces, held all elements spellbound. Again after the Reformation, which gave a wonderful impetus to a more independent, individualistic mode of life, the time was ripe for a development of the feeling of unity and national pride. And once more the old menace, now in the form of an Hispano-Germanic empire ruled by Charles V.,

<sup>21</sup> Vid. Carruth, p. 135 ff.

<sup>22</sup> Carruth, p. 150.

<sup>23</sup> Walther's *Sprüche*, complaining about the hopeless condition of Germany and the contempt of the Popes for the land, are well known.

loomed large on the horizon. Under the circumstances, it seems, intellectual cohesion was the highest possible attainment in Germany, for as soon as the musty imperial organism had been buried, the country rapidly advanced toward political unity. Fortunately for Germany the wars of Frederick the Great had preceded the dissolution; fortunately, too, the French Revolution, with its subtle influence on Germany, came when it did and created a Napoleon. Such preliminary happenings added importance to the subsequent Wars of Liberation and made the momentous events of the fifty-five years which followed doubly significant.

In the light of what precedes, then, we shall undertake to study the reaction of the literary minds of Germany to the political condition of their native land.



## CHAPTER II

### THE PERIOD PRIOR TO 1500

As was pointed out in the preface and to some extent, too, in the course of the previous chapter, our study aims to lay particular emphasis on the satirical literature of the subject. For doubtless this presents not only the most interesting and significant aspect of the theme, but also the one which in the course of time became predominant as a result of the degeneration of the Empire. Hence some general remarks on the nature of satire will not be out of place.

In a short article published in the *Deutsche Rundschau*<sup>1</sup> entitled *Historisch-Politische Satiren*, Richard M. Meyer distinguishes between two classes of satire, first the ironical, which accentuates the vices and follies of the present by representing them favorably, and second the punitive, which constructs a climactic catalogue of the vices and follies of the present, with the purpose of emphasizing the ideal more sharply than by direct portrayal. A possible third order, which, however, merely blends the two preceding, he calls the Novo-Antique. It catalogues the foibles of the present, as it were, transfers them into some remote time and place and represents them serio-comically as applied to their new environment. A good example of the last mentioned device would be Wieland's *Abderiten*. But one characteristic is essential to all good satire, viz., it must be levelled at contemporary, still existent phenomena. The last statement immediately settles for us a chronological question, for it delimits our study in a definite way to the millenary period 800 A.D. to 1806. Literature which appeared subsequent to the year 1806 will, therefore, not concern us directly. When, for example, Grillparzer in

<sup>1</sup>Vol. 138, pp. 67-79. Schiller includes satire in the category of *Sentimentalische Dichtung* and describes it as intellectual poetry in contradistinction to emotional poetry, represented by the elegy and the idyl.

the *Bruderszwist*, and again especially toward the end of Act I. of *Ottokar*, introduces remarks that tend to disparage the Holy Roman Empire, we have interesting instances of an historical treatment of the theme, but no more.<sup>2</sup> In the case of Grillparzer's sources, naturally, the situation is different, for we are dealing there with direct, real satire. Pessina's *Mars Moravicus*, for instance, written in 1677, relates how Ottokar, at the height of his power and insolence, disparaged the title of Roman Emperor and contemptuously boasted that a King of Bohemia was far more than a Roman Emperor. This remark, as well as a similar one by the still earlier Czechish chronicler Wacek, bear more than mere historical significance, since the Empire still existed at the time.

In the light of what was said in the previous chapter, one would hardly expect satirical expression or unfavorable comment on the subject of the Empire or any phase of it before the Great Interregnum, or even later, altho, to be sure, signs of demoralization were traced back to the very time of Charlemagne. And, indeed, the facts in the case bear out this supposition. During the four and one half centuries after the coronation of Charles the Great we find a very negligible quantity of anti-imperialistic literature. The reasons are apparent. In the first place, before the period of the Middle High German classics, no German literature of importance existed. In the second place, the medieval mind could see nothing reprehensible in the World-Empire and its machinery. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed the gradual weakening of the charm, yet not until the sixteenth century, when men's intellect slowly began to be enlightened, do we meet works of a genuinely satirical character. But without anticipating, we shall examine first the period that preceded, an era of gradual preparation and development.

<sup>2</sup> So, too, in Wedekind's *Frühlings Erwachen* the teacher Zungenschlag says, Act III., Scene 1: *Es he-herrscht hier eine A-A-Atmosphäre wie in unterirdischen Kata-Katakomben, wie in den A-Aktensäulen des weitland Wetslarer Ka-Ka-Ka-Ka-Kammergerichtes.* Cf. also Baumbach's *Der Schwiegersohn*, where a quarrel in a tailor's shop is humorously compared with the struggles of Guelfs and Ghibellines in the Holy Roman Empire. Cf. finally Gerhart Hauptmann's *Festspiel*.

There is one point on which modern historians agree unanimously, to wit, the continuity of history, the fact that in it, as in geology, there are but few precise lines of chronological demarcation. To a large extent history is a manifestation of the theory of flux and reflux; the conventional periods, as found in the ordinary historical textbooks, are chiefly a convenient means of assisting the learner and are due more to precedent or to the arbitrariness of the writer than to inner necessity. Similarly we find it quite impossible to ascertain just when the first quip at the expense of the Holy Roman Empire was perpetrated, altho we can trace with readiness the causes that gave rise to a satirical attitude. And so it is whenever one deals with the gradual inculcation of an idea or a set of beliefs: in the great majority of cases the dissemination is due not to any individual but to the trend of the times.

*Freidank.*

The examination in the foregoing chapter of various literary sources up to the time of Walther von der Vogelweide tended to bring out the fact that, altho national German patriotism did not exist at the time, there was an abundance of zeal for the imperial cause, a condition which does not *per se* preclude coexistent satire, but at all events makes it rather unlikely. And in truth it would not be difficult to swell the chorus of pro-imperialism with further quotations dating from the same era or even later. Neidhart von Reuenthal, Ulrich von Lichtenstein, Der Marner, and Wernher der Gartenaere (*Meier Helmbrecht*) say nothing disparaging of the Empire, while the *Tegernsee Spiel vom Antichrist* (circa 1160), the only Church play that deals at all with politics, is very patriotic and pro-imperial, being a reflection of the first and more glorious half of the reign of Frederick I. (Barbarossa),<sup>3</sup> and illustrating the medieval conception of the divine nature of the Empire. On the other hand, the way is by degrees being prepared for a less favorable attitude. For example, Pope Gregory VII.,

<sup>3</sup> Vid. D. N. L., Vol. 14, Part I., p. 199 ff. Cf. also Golther, *Die deutsche Dichtung im Mittelalter*, p. 169 ff.

the famous Hildebrand, in a letter to the Bishop of Metz written in March, 1081, calls the imperial and the royal offices dangerous and says that their incumbents rarely attain salvation and are never honored by miracles, while their responsibilities are terrible.<sup>4</sup> Similarly the *Annolied*, written probably toward the end of the eleventh century, bemoans the lack of harmony in the Empire. Freidank, too, the author of the *Bescheidenheit*, who lived early in the thirteenth century, reveals iconoclastic tendencies. Compared, for example, with the less popular Thomasin von Zirclaere (*Der wälsche Gast*), who shows profound respect for the powers that be, Freidank is quite free in his views. Altho well disposed to the Empire, he sees in the Emperor after all only a human being, who is just as much subject to the torture of fleas or to the call of Death as anyone else. He even goes so far as to scorn princes and lords in general as a danger to the land because of their cankerous greed and insensate ambition and because of their lack of initiative and interest in the government. Speaking of their pusillanimous nature he says:<sup>5</sup>

*Tiuschiu lant sint roubes vol:  
Gerichte, voget, münze und zol  
Diu wurden ê durch guot erdâht,  
Nû sint si gar ze roube brâht.  
Swaz ie man guotes ûf geleit,  
ze bezzern die kristenheit,  
die hoehsten und die hêrsten  
die brechent ez zem êrsten.*

*Otto von Freising.*

Chronologically even earlier than Freidank is the famous chronicler Otto von Freising (ob. 1158), the author of the *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*. He, too, takes a novel and interesting attitude which did not become common until many centuries later. Not only does he refute the prev-

<sup>4</sup> Translated in Robinson: *Readings*, I., 284. Original in Doeberl: *Monumenta Germ. Histor. Sel.*, III., 40 etc.

<sup>5</sup> Bezzenberger, 75,24-76,1. For translations cf. Appendix A.

alent belief of his time that the Empire is a very venerable structure, a heritage left by ancient Rome, but he asserts that even if the proud claims of imperialists are true, the Empire has passed thru a long series of transformations which have given it an entirely new stamp. The rust and soot of time, he avers, have settled on it; it is diseased at its very apex, and the malady threatens to spread.<sup>6</sup> As early as the twelfth century, then, expression was given to the heretical view that the Empire was not eternal and that time is bound to make changes in any organization of its kind.<sup>7</sup>

### *Shrovetide Plays.*

The Shrovetide plays of the fifteenth century are usually not thought of in connection with satirical literature, yet one of these compositions, written probably by Rosenplüt, furnishes an interesting example of a political polemic. It is entitled *Des Turken Vasnachtspil*<sup>8</sup> and is intended as a satire on the Empire and a eulogy of the city of Nuremberg. The citizens of the latter, solicitous for the welfare of the Holy Roman Em-

<sup>6</sup> Ed. Adolf Hofmeister, 2d ed., p. 7-8: *Ut enim de aliis taceam, regnum Romanorum, quod in Daniele, propter totius orbis bello domiti singularem principatum quam Graeci Monarchiam vocant, ferro comparatur, ex tot alternationibus, maxime diebus nostris, ex nobilissimo factum est paene novissimum; ut de Urbe, Senatu, Populoque Romano, juxta poetam:*

*Vix magni stet nominis umbra.*

*Ab urbe quippe ad Graecos, a Graecis ad Francos, a Francis ad Lombardos, a Lombardis rursum ad Teutonicos Francos derivatum, non solum antiquitate senuit, sed etiam ipsa mobilitate sui, veluti levis glarea, hac illaque aquis circumjecta, sordes multiplices ac defectus varios contraxit. Ostenditur igitur in ipso capite mundi, mundi miseria, ipsiusque occasus toti corpori minatur interitum.*

<sup>7</sup> Heresy was seriously brought forth as a charge against theorists holding such and similar views. Himly, p. 46, quotes Ubertus de Lampugnano (end of 14th century) in some theses defended at Prague as follows: *Si quis diceret Imperatorem romanum non esse monarcham et dominum totius universi in quo Christus colitur, esset haereticus, quia diceret contra determinationem Ecclesiae.* Authors, pro-imperialistic or with imperial learnings, as e. g., the Austrian didactic poet Peter Suchenwirt of the late fourteenth century, with his childlike faith in the Empire even in the days of King Wenzel, are frequent in every age and will be mentioned from time to time.

<sup>8</sup> *Bibl. Lit. Ver. Stuttgart*, Vol. 28, p. 288 ff.

pire, have extended to the Sultan of Turkey a promise of safe-conduct and an invitation to come to Germany to hear a report of the evils that confront the Empire. With his followers the Moslem sovereign comes from the Orient, where everything is paradisaic and peaceful and where no taxes are levied. In Germany he finds things very different, for no one, it seems, can enjoy peace there. Some Germans, among them a knight and a noble, accost the Turkish party and upon inquiring about their mission are assured that the latter have come with good intentions. The Turkish Emperor gives a list of the worst sins committed by the Christians, among them usury, adultery, and the practise of false pride. Hereupon a messenger from the Pope comes and accuses the Turks of hostility to Christianity, but he is refuted by the Moslems, who hold the Christians more to blame for the spirit of mutual distrust. An imperial envoy now approaches and pours vituperation over the Turks, who answer very sarcastically and refuse to be driven away by threats. A messenger sent by the Electors pursues similar tactics and is likewise rebuffed. Finally two citizens of Nuremberg come and assure the Oriental ruler that his safe-conduct will not be violated. The latter in return promises his hosts that he will always be ready to reciprocate favors. If we consider that at the time when this extravaganza was written the very existence of the Empire was imperilled by the Turkish menace, we can the better appreciate the acrid irony of the situation here portrayed. There can be no doubt about the impression that it made on contemporaries; it brought home to every reader the hopeless discord and internal rottenness of the imperial government.

#### *Brant.*

Sebastian Brant's span of life extended well into the sixteenth century (ob. 1521), still he was a child of the earlier period in which he was born. His great work, *Das Narrenschiff*, appeared for the first time in 1494. Altho of no great originality, Brant is an interesting writer because he exem-

plifies a peculiar brand of subjectivity. He always thinks in terms of persons and personal interest. We cannot expect to find in him any new theories or epoch-making theses. His political ideal was the medieval doctrine of a close interrelation of the Empire and the Church. Emperor Maximilian was his idol; he even dreamt of the possibility of a fantastic fusion of the spiritual and temporal power in the person of his beloved ruler. Naturally, then, Brant is quite favorably inclined toward the Empire as an ideal institution, yet he is by no means purblind in regard to its actual shortcomings. In the section *Von end des gewaltes* he says that he has examined the history of every empire that ever existed and has found that without exception they came to an end. He adds (l. 90):<sup>9</sup>

*Das römsch rich blibt, so lang got will  
Got hat jm gsetzt syn zutt und moss;  
Der geb, das es noch werd so gross,  
Das jm all erd sy underthon  
Als es von recht und gsatz solt han.*

The chapter entitled *Von abgang des glouben* contains a passage on Rome and its history (ll. 95 ff.).<sup>10</sup> Brant relates how the city flourished first under the kings, then under the republic, but how gradually lust for power frittered away the resources of the state. Thereupon the conversion of the republic into an empire was effected and for fifteen hundred years the process of waning continued. Addressing Rome directly he continues:<sup>11</sup>

*Glich wie sich myndern düt der mon,  
So er schwyndt und jm schyn gebrist,  
Das yetz gar wenig an dir ist.  
Well gott, das du ouch grössest dich,  
Do mit du sygst dem mon gantz glich.  
Den dunckt nit, das er ettwas hab,  
Wer nicht dem Römschen rich bricht ab!*

<sup>9</sup> Zarncke ed., p. 57; Bobertag ed., p. 145.

<sup>10</sup> Zarncke ed., p. 95; Bobertag ed., p. 270.

<sup>11</sup> *Loc. cit.*

The idea expressed in the last two lines is repeated, ll. 121 ff.:

*Ein yeder fürst der gantz bricht ab,  
Das er dar von eyn fäder hab.  
Dar umb ist es nit wunder gross,  
Ob joch das rich sy blutt und bloss.*

The poet continues in the same vein, pleading with the princes to show more public spirit and patriotism, for, he says (ll. 143 f.), they are doing their level best to destroy their own Empire.

The above quotations from Sebastian Brant could scarcely be called satirical according to the accepted terminology. It is manifest, however, that they reveal both an attitude of mind and an outlook into the future which must be termed decidedly unfavorable, except for the fact that the author is in sympathy with his country and is concerned about its impending fate. They are, therefore, important as significant utterances of a serious-minded patriot, who is not blinded by passion to the existing political evils.

### *Folksong.*

Doubtless one of the most illuminating genres of literature for the student of history in any of its various phases is the folksong. It has the advantage of directness and usually of simplicity; besides, in many cases it offers views that may safely be regarded as representative of the class from which they issue. For the present study, too, this utility is considerable. The great majority of folksongs extant in German literature, however, date from the sixteenth century or even more recent times and will, therefore, be treated in their proper chronological order in a later chapter. At present the earlier songs only, as they appear chiefly in the first two volumes of Liliencron and in Uhland<sup>12</sup> will demand our attention. It will be noticed that many of them are hardly intelligible to one

<sup>12</sup> R. v. Liliencron: *Die historischen Volkslieder der Deutschen vom 13. bis 16. Jahrhundert*, 4 volumes.

L. Uhland: *Alte hoch- und niederdeutsche Volkslieder*, 5 Bücher.



without an intimate knowledge of contemporary history, since they are replete with allusions to obscure events, representing in a sense the periodical reviews of current events and the daily newspapers of modern times. As far as is necessary, therefore, for a satisfactory comprehension of the point involved, an endeavor will be made to elucidate such allusions and covert references.

The earliest poem of interest, *Zu Feldkirch*, dated between 1334-1336,<sup>18</sup> deals with an unsuccessful campaign on the part of Emperor Louis IV. against the town of Feldkirch near Lake Constance, undertaken as the result of a dispute about the appointment of a Bishop of Constance. It is manifestly satirical at the expense of the Emperor, heaping ridicule on his head for his impotence and braggadocio. Right at the outset the author smiles over the fact that Louis has howled so much about the incident that he has become hoarse as a result of his ululation. He himself is allowed to speak and expresses as follows his determination to capture the town:

*Das rich hat vil ze schaffen.  
Ich will ze ainem affen  
werden, als ich ze Merspurg wart.*

—an allusion to his inglorious failure to bring the inhabitants of the latter city to terms. Then with splendid irony the following boastful words are attributed to him:

*Ich half dem künig von Engellant;  
der wer verdorben in den grunt,  
wer ich im nit in kurzer stunt  
ze helfe komen, er wer verlorn!*

—which represent a deliberate perversion of the truth. As a matter of fact Louis had negotiated with England to strengthen his *own* position against France and the Pope. He goes on to say with the greatest seriousness, apparently, that if in spite of his laudable efforts the city persists in its refusal to submit, he will resort to magic concoctions and the like. In conclusion

<sup>18</sup> Liliencron, Vol. I., No. 11, p. 40 ff.

he advises his siege troops patiently to await his arrival, for altho he will be rather slow in coming, he will *ultimately* arrive on the scene of action:

*Ir sond nit vernichten (i. e., verzweifeln)  
ob ich ain wenig ze lange wer.  
Enbieten mir alweg mâr,  
bi ainer wil so kom ich!*

*Von den Reichsfürsten*, written circa 1385 by an adherent of the towns,<sup>14</sup> is a longish poem, parts of it fragmentary and, therefore, obscure, satirizing in a malignant way the various imperial princes, among them the Archbishop of Mayence, the Palsgrave Rupert, the Duke of Bavaria and the Emperor Wenzel himself. The latter, it is claimed, was entirely too young at the time of his election (he was a boy in his teens) and was chosen because of influence and wealth. But the allusions thruout are mainly personal, altho of course a certain feeling of dissatisfaction with the Empire is revealed. In *König Wenzels Landfriede*,<sup>15</sup> circa 1398, we have a more general treatment of conditions in the Empire and of the Emperor's impotence in quelling anarchical feuds, which became increasingly worse until the election of Rupert of the Palatinate to the kingship (1400). The occasion of this quip was the proclamation of a general peace by Wenzel, a useless measure, because the Emperor lacked all power for its execution. The author indulges in merciless ridicule of the manifesto and slyly reports that he has received from another source the following precious bit of information:

*man het es an die lüte gelan  
und sol der krieg in satzungē stan  
bis dass die fünve zesamene kumen  
als ich die rede han vernumen,  
dass sū dem krieg sülent stillen  
mit der hērn und stete willen.  
Die fünf will ich ūch nennen,*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 30, p. 99 ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 41, p. 201 ff.

*so mügent ir sū erkennen.  
 Der erste ein bader wesen sol,  
 der nie gewitzete, merket wol.  
 Den anderen ich hie erzong:  
 ein underkörfer der nie gelang.  
 Den dritten nemne ich an dirre zal:  
 ein müller der nie gestal.  
 Den vierden nemne ich an dirre frist:  
 einer der rüdig oder kretzig ist  
 und do bi nie gegucket hat,  
 der füget wol an diesen rat.  
 Der fünfte sol ein spiler sin,  
 der do reiset bi dem win,  
 alle tage tribet ungevür  
 und doch do bi nie geswür.*

To the casual observer it seems surprising that many of the folksongs of the time, in fact, the majority of them, are not unfavorable to the Empire, altho the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were dark times, indeed. This phenomenon admits of at least two explanations. The first, the fatalistic belief in the Holy Roman Empire, a theory from which it was impossible to wean the medieval mind, has been sufficiently described. The second is the fact that many of the so-called *Volkslieder* are not what they purport to be, but rather songs composed expressly at the command or desire of a lord or ruler. A good example is the poem *Türkenschrei* of 1453<sup>16</sup> on the occasion of the fall of Constantinople, which was undoubtedly written at the imperial behest; another, *Von Kaiser Friedrich*,<sup>17</sup> was written in 1471, when the Emperor appeared in the Empire proper for the first time in almost a quarter of a century. It praises Frederick profusely, altho he little deserved commendation of any kind. Liliencron is probably right in calling it *besahlte Arbeit*.

Other songs again are not altogether satirical in intent but contain serious and friendly admonition and advice. Rosenplüt's *Von den Türcken*,<sup>18</sup> 1459, is a fair instance. It urges

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 100, p. 460.

<sup>17</sup> Liliencron, Vol. II., No. 126, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Liliencron, Vol. I., No. 109, p. 503 ff.

the Emperor to utilize the Turkish peril as a means of bringing the powerful princes, as for example Margrave Albrecht Achill, to terms, and it warns him not to bungle the task, for:

*der koch ist wol strafens wert,  
verselzet er die speise.*

In recalling to mind the terrible defeat of the Imperials at the hands of the Hussites in 1431, Rosenplüt compares the Empire to a donkey that is lashed into submissiveness. He urges the destruction of the eternal foes, the "planing down" of nobles and lords and the adequate protection of the imperial cities. That he considered extravagance among the upper classes an additional curse on the land appears in his prose *Türkenspiel* of 1456,<sup>19</sup> a sort of continuous dialogue between a Turk and an Imperialist. Hans Folz, too, is in the main a friend of the Empire, yet he says in his *Ystori vom Römischen Reich* (1480):<sup>20</sup>

*Das weltlich swert ist gancz verrost  
Das geistlich det noch was es solt  
Wern neür die haupt ein ander holt  
Und stünd ein fürst dem andern pey  
So plib die christenheyt wol frey  
Vor aller unglaubigen rot  
So ist eins clag des andern spot.*

*Von dem strit und der slacht vor Granson*, 1476,<sup>21</sup> tells of the defeat of the imperial troops, allied with those of Charles of Burgundy, at the hands of the Swiss:

*Oesterrich, du slafest gar lang,  
dass dich nit weckt der vogelsang,  
hast dich der mette versumet!*

Emperor Frederick had sent his nephew Sigmund to the assistance of Charles, but some of the imperial troops had ob-

<sup>19</sup> Quoted *ibid.*, p. 505.

<sup>20</sup> *Bibl. Lit. Ver. Stuttg.*, Vol. 30, p. 1320.

<sup>21</sup> *Liliencron*, Vol. II., No. 138, p. 74.

served their usual custom of arriving on the battlefield late.  
The author comments on the defeat:

*Von schandlicher flucht ward nie geseit,  
des fröwe dich, alle christenheit,  
es wer dir hart ergangen,  
het Burgunn gewonnen einen rung,  
alls römisch rich het genomen ein sprung,  
es ward darumb angevangen!  
Darumb tet billich römisch rich  
ein merklich bistand desgelich,  
mag menglich briefen und merken.  
Ich kouft nit fründschaft umb ein brot,  
der mich verliessen in der not  
und mich erst wolten sterken!*

Remarks that reflect no glory on the Empire!

An incident which could be considered extremely comical, were it not for the fact that it bewrays the thoroly rotten condition of the Empire even in Maximilian's day, is related in a collection of poems appearing in Liliencron II., p. 295 ff. The most important of the series also is found in Uhland.<sup>22</sup> It relates how the beautiful heiress, Anna of Bretagne, married by proxy to the Roman King Maximilian, was kidnapped by Charles VIII. of France, who disregarded his own betrothed, Margaretha of Austria, at the time still a minor. The spectacle of the nominally powerful heir-apparent to the loftiest temporal position in the world reduced practically to the state of a mendicant, who goes from court to court begging for help, so that he may raise an army to assert his outraged rights,<sup>23</sup> is pitiful indeed.

During the first years of Maximilian's reign difficulties between the Empire, especially the Swabian League, and the Swiss Confederation arose and led to the so-called Swabian War. The crux of the matter was an attempt on the part of the Imperialists once more to force upon the Swiss the vassalage of the Empire. Many songs were composed by ad-

<sup>22</sup> *Das Fräulein aus Britannia*, 1491. Uhland, No. 173, p. 455 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Von dem kaiserlichen her*. Liliencron, II., No. 181, p. 302 ff.

herents of both sides. Among those of pro-Swiss leanings is *Ein new lied von den Schweizern und von dem schwebischen bund*<sup>24</sup> of 1495, which warns Maximilian that whoever attacks the Confederates unjustly will be defeated, for (Str. 26):

*Got der ist ir herre,  
Maria des gelich,  
sie feren on all schwere  
im schuld das römisch rich.*

When soon after the imperial forces were decisively defeated by the Swiss in the battle of Dorneck, *Ein Schweizerlied wider die Schwaben* (1499)<sup>25</sup> was written to describe the event and to ridicule the vanquished foe, especially the Swabians.<sup>26</sup> Among the songs composed by pro-imperialistic writers two are notable because they afford an honest insight into contemporary conditions. One, by Mathes Schantz,<sup>27</sup> shows sincere interest in the Empire, but referring to the successful imperial war levy of 1495, urges the people not to let the government lure money out of their pockets, nor to await cunctatory attempts on the part of the Emperor to introduce reforms, but to use their resources according to their own discretion. The other, *Ain spruch von den Schweizern*, 1500,<sup>28</sup> mentions the peace made at Basel that was unfavorable to the Imperialists. Altho bitter against the "perfidious Swiss," the author ruefully admits the weakness of the Empire.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 197, p. 370.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 208, p. 413 ff.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 210, p. 420 ff., pokes more fun at the defeated Swabians.

Str. 3: *die hand vil silber und ouch gold,  
si mögend geben richen sold  
und ligend an iren betten.*

In Strophe 37 the Bishop of Mayence is addressed:

*Bischof von Mens mit dienem gedicht,  
das schafst mit dim gadengericht, (satirical for kammergericht)  
du wolltest die eidgnossen darin zwingen:  
kemist zu inen in das gestreng,  
du gewünnst werlich vil zu eng,  
Mit inen mustest ringen.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 202, p. 386.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 211, p. 427 ff.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

A glance at any standard work on German history in general, as for example that of Johannes Janssen,<sup>1</sup> or on the more restricted field of purely literary endeavor, shows that the sixteenth century was an age abounding in trenchant satire and keen lampoons. Many reasons for this fact are patent; the majority of them grow directly out of the very nature of the period. Literary critics have hitherto devoted much fruitful labor to the subject, but, it seems, they have always contemplated with predilection certain phases which relate to ecclesiastical or purely social phenomena. To be sure, the great bulk of available material does concern these aspects and, moreover, the keenest minds of the time were occupied with them. Yet events political assume thruout the period a place of no small importance.

It was pointed out in a general way in the introductory chapter that the sixteenth century marks a quickened tendency on the part of writers to express themselves in a satirical vein regarding the Empire. The earlier formative years, which we considered above, had furnished the necessary acceleration, a prerequisite which if once attained gives the genus satire both virility and endurance. The age of the Reformation and of the Renascence attests both of these qualities in connection with our subject. But not only in the literature of the time does this satirical attitude become apparent; the very documents of the Empire itself more than once offer a reflex of prevailing sentiment. So for instance an official duodecennial confirmation of the Swabian League for the year 1500, made at Halle in the diocese of Würzburg in 1501 thru the apostolical cardinal Raymond of Gurck, in whose hands Pope

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*. Vol. I., p. 272 ff. and Vol. VI., p. 108 ff.

Alexander placed a bull enjoining upon him the pacification of the princes, the cessation of hostilities and the confirmation of the league,<sup>2</sup> couched in the formal style of the chancellery, contains an interesting sentence, the manifest object of which is to condone the imperial sins of omission. After mentioning the various parties to the agreement, the Cardinal says:<sup>3</sup> *Et licet Imperii vires ad eam (i. e., Ligam) conservandam ac defendendam per se sufficient, tamen Principes Lige praefate ac eorum Senatus Illustris in Civitate Hallensi existentes nos obsecrarunt, quatenus Pacis ac ejusdem Declarationis nec non ac Lige Suevorum Unionis ac Jurisdictionis prorogate Sedis Apostolice confirmationem ac munimen apponere dignaremur.* A very diplomatic way, indeed, of suggesting that the imperial power after all left something to be desired! The account of the election of Emperor Charles V. at Frankfurt, June, 1519,<sup>4</sup> is also of interest in this respect. The speeches of the Archbishop of Mayence, particularly, bring out the weaknesses of the Emperor and the Empire as well as the ill repute which the latter suffered in foreign countries.<sup>5</sup>

### Sachs.

Hans Sachs, the prolific Mastersinger-cobbler of the time, is usually not regarded as a political thinker, still his contributions in this line are considerable. It is quite generally known that he was intensely pro-imperialistic in his sentiments. His many *Türkengedichte*, for example, which deal with the theme of Turkish invasions into the Empire and methods of meeting the menace,<sup>6</sup> are sincere in their appeal to the dormant patriotism of his contemporaries. The two poems, again, that he devoted to the entry of the Roman King Ferdinand, the

<sup>2</sup> Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, IV., 1, p. 4-5, No. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Loc. cit.* For translations cf. Appendix A.

<sup>4</sup> Dumont-Rousset, *Supplement*, Vol. IV., *Ceremonial of the Imperial Court*, p. 568.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 569 and 577.

<sup>6</sup> Examples are *Vernunftung zu ainem statlich Dürcken-zug an das Reich*, Keller-Goetze, Vol. 22, pp. 373-379, and *Ein klag zu Gott uber die grausam wütereij des grausamen Türgken ob seinen viel kriegien und obsigen*, Keller, Vol. 2, p. 434 ff. Both poems were written in 1532.



heir-apparent to the imperial office, into Nuremberg in 1540,<sup>7</sup> and the visit that the Emperor Charles V. himself made in the following year,<sup>8</sup> show great interest in imperial activities. To be sure, such descriptions are found even before Sachs' day,<sup>9</sup> but with the latter they gained a distinctly personal touch. One is, in fact, tempted to compare especially his *Kayserliche mayestat Caroli der V. einreyten* with the word-picture that Goethe gives in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* of the coronation festivities of Joseph II. at Frankfurt in 1765 and to hazard the conjecture that Goethe received suggestions from Sachs—an easy possibility.

It may be of interest, too, to examine some of Sachs' longer versified political tracts. Poetry they can hardly be called, for it seems certain that even their author intended them for educative or journalistic purposes, easier to remember and more pleasant to read in verse form. Important among these works is the rather longish *Historia. All römisch kayser nach ordnung, wie lang yeder geregiert hat, zu welcher Zeit, was sitten der gehabt und was todes er gestorben sey, von dem ersten an bis auff den yetzigen grossmechtigsten kayser Carolum 5. (1530)*.<sup>10</sup> Right at the outset Sachs announces that the history of the Roman line of Emperors is varied, eventful and difficult. He begins with Julius Cæsar and patiently presents a mass of names, dates and alleged facts, following at times mere rumored reports, occasionally committing downright errors. He mentions the bipartition of the Empire under Constantine with no further comment. One of his prime considerations is always: Was the Emperor in question a Christian? After the Eastern Emperor Zeno we are told of the now ensuing Interregnum in the West, i. e., Italy, which lasted 30 years (in reality 324). Under the year 800 the revival of the Western line by Charles the Great is announced, but secularly enough the Pope is not mentioned in connection with the matter. Charles the Great is not considered a Ger-

<sup>7</sup> Sachs, Vol. II, pp. 427-432.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 432-434.

<sup>9</sup> Sachs, Vol. I, pp. 301-302; Keller *Fastnachtspiele*, III., 1208.

<sup>10</sup> Sachs, Vol. II, pp. 338-372.

man. Some hundred years after the death of Charlemagne the division of his realm into Germanic and Gallic sections is referred to. Under the year 962 the coronation of Otto the Great is noted; Otto is called the first specifically German Emperor. The famous pilgrimage of Henry IV. to Canossa is portrayed and Sachs of course sides with the Emperor against the Pope Gregory VII. The Great Interregnum is not emphasized. Rudolf I. of Hapsburg is praised for restoring order in the rapidly decentralizing Empire; Maximilian is lauded to the skies and his exploits are rather minutely described. According to Sachs, then, the Holy Roman Empire of his day was not only a direct continuation of the old Roman Empire of Augustus, but the selfsame structure. He pays a minimum of attention to the Pope. Apparently he has no conception whatsoever of the medieval theory of the Empire.

Another poem that supplements the foregoing: *Histori: Das römisch reich*,<sup>11</sup> is in the form of a dialogue between the poet and an *erenholt*, an omniscient herald, who relates how the Roman Empire originated, how it changed, and how it fell into the hands of the *löblich teutsche nation*. The informant without compunction begins with Romulus, works his way tediously up to "Caius Julius," with whom the Empire proper begins. Then follow the essential facts given in the previous catalogue with some important additions. Chief among these is the account of the gentlemen's agreement between Pope Gregory V. and Emperor Otto III. for the establishment of the Electorate, which subsequently, says Sachs, elected all emperors. He mentions the seven Electors, among them the King of Bohemia, and accords the latter the position of leader. This poem, like all others of Sachs on the subject, ends with good wishes for the Empire and reveals Sachs as a sincere patriot and imperialist. He was evidently greatly interested in the Romano-Germanic Empire and delighted in contemplating its history and ancient customs. Furthermore he shows great concern for its welfare, altho he leaves the Popes out of consideration as much as possible.

<sup>11</sup> Keller-Götze, Vol. 16, pp. 192-196.

But it would be wrong to claim that Sachs is a blind imperialist, for he realized as well as any man of his day the shortcomings of the medieval imperial system. It redounds to his credit that he repeatedly expressed his honest opinion on the subject in terms that could not be misunderstood. In fact, some of the most brilliant satire on the theme is from his pen. One of the very best of his compositions pertinent to our topic is *Ein artlich gesprech der götter, die zwietracht des römischen reichs betreffende*, 1544,<sup>12</sup> written in the last period of Charles V.'s fourth war against France. It relates how one night, when he was in his fiftieth year, Sachs lay awake worrying about the discord of the Roman Empire in which diets met and deliberations were held every day but without success, for no progress could be discerned. Finally he fell asleep and had a dream. The angel Genius visits him and takes him up to heaven, promising to show him there something of interest. He is conducted to a hidden place from which he can observe an assembly of the gods. Jupiter opens the meeting and presents the topic for discussion, the strife and discord of the Holy Roman Empire as well as ways and means of checking the evil (ll. 43 ff.) :

*Ihr götter all gleich,  
Es hat das römisch reich  
Sambt teutscher nation  
Zwitracht und widerspon,  
Unnd wirt man nit ableynen  
Unnd gütlichen vereynen  
Die zwispelting parthey,  
Das fried zwischen ihn sey,  
So muss das reich zergehn,  
Mag lenger nit bestehn.*

Mars speaks first; he suggests that the various factions be incited to war, that the most powerful be allowed to win and to rule over the rest. Jupiter objects to this plan as too sanguinary and destructive and asks Juno, the goddess of marriage, to suggest a more peaceful plan in the form of a new

<sup>12</sup> Keller, Vol. 4, pp. 176-188.

marital union. But Juno can only point to the then recently contracted marriage of Francis I. and Eleonora, sister of Charles V., and confesses her inability to do more. She advises the use of gold for the purpose of establishing peace and concord. Thereupon Pluto is commanded to distribute gold among the princes, but he shows that this would only lead to worse quarreling and suggests the introduction of poverty. The goddess Penury, however, argues that such a plan would bear no better results and moves that Mercury descend to earth to compel peace in Jupiter's behalf, threatening all recalcitrants with summons to the supreme court of Jupiter. But this scheme, too, is found unfeasible because of the dogmatic obstinacy and hypocrisy of the factions. First, says Mercury, the darkness, i. e., the discord, must disappear. But the luminiferous god Phebus avers that this also would be of no avail, for sophistry and cunning can turn even light to darkness. Saturn angrily breaks in with an impatient suggestion to burn, murder and eradicate all who violate the peace—a method that strikes Jupiter as too bellicose. Now Minerva has a happy thought. She knows of a person, *Res publica* or *Gmein-nutz* (i. e., general concern for the public welfare, personified), who alone can cure the ills of the world. He has, however, disappeared from the midst of men. No one seems able to ascertain his whereabouts. Mercury is certain that he is not to be found in any of the imperial cities, and Luna can only recall having seen him many years ago, leaving Europe and seeking his old haunts in Greece and Asia. Jupiter confesses that he can now understand the plight of the Empire (ll. 297 ff.):

*Erst nimbt mich nymmer wunder,  
Das es so ubel geht,  
Im reich zwitrechtig steht,  
Weyl der gemeyne nutz,  
Des römischen reiches schutz,  
Wont bey öbern noch untern.  
Mich thut vil mehr verwundern  
Das römisch reich vor langen  
Jarn nicht zu grund ist gangen.*

At last Diana solves the mystery. On one of her recent hunts she remembers having found this selfsame Gmein-nutz far off in the woods at a spring, weeping, but he hastened off in shame as he saw her approaching. Mercury is forthwith sent down to earth to fetch him, but soon returns with the report that he has found the poor wretch suffering terribly from countless wounds and at the point of death. Immediately the surgeon Aesculapius is detailed to accompany Mercury on a first aid expedition to Gmein-nutz. Whether they arrive in time is left untold, for the rooster crows in Sachs' barnyard and awakens his master.

Surely this is a thoughtful and well elaborated investigation on the subject of the ills and weaknesses of the Holy Roman Empire of Sachs' day. It is replete with satire on the aimless and petty quarrels of the time, on the impotence of the rulers and princes to get together for the purpose of evolving a strong centralized government, and on the tendency of the age toward particularism. The poem presents not only great and vital political problems, but offers a basis for their healthy solution as well. It reveals the workings of an acute, altho ruggedly artless, ingenuous mind.

Another poem on a germane topic is: *Der klagend ernholt uber fürsten und adel* (1539),<sup>13</sup> a severe complaint against the degeneracy of the princes and nobles, who have become haughty and arrogant, who sell or pawn their lands as well as appurtenances and squander the money thus realized. The colloquy *Ein artlich gesprech der götter, warum so viel ubler regenten auff erden sind* (1553)<sup>14</sup> offers another explanation. Phebus has fallen in love with Luna and has seduced her. As punishment for both, Jupiter proclaims that neither the sun nor the moon shall shine for a full year. Most of the other gods vehemently oppose this drastic punishment, especially so Gmein-nutz, who again appears as a debilitated old man, a sad wreck. But relentlessly Jupiter adheres to his threat and lets destruction take its course, altho the earth itself is innocent.

<sup>13</sup> Keller, Vol. 3, pp. 565 ff.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, pp. 268 ff.

Sachs offers the moral. As it is in heaven so it is on earth: the rulers are invariably surrounded by wise councillors, but in their stubbornness refuse to accept well meant advice:

*Wie es geht bey den himlischen,  
So geht es auch bey den irrdischen  
Herrschaften, die wol frü und spet  
Umb sich haben vil weyser rhet,  
Den selben volgens aber nicht,  
Sondern sie werden abgericht  
Von niedischen, heuchlern und alfantzern  
Und den eigennützing finantzern.*

The poem *Ein claged Deutschlands und gesprech mit dem getrewen Eckhart* (1546)<sup>15</sup> gives us a conversation that ensues between the faithful Eckhart and a wretched, unhappy woman, Deutschland, who wanders about in the woods, pregnant and with dishevelled hair. The eagle should lawfully be her protector, but is persecuting her with murderous intent and is being egged on by the many bats, owls, and other nocturnal birds that Germany has nurtured as her pet companions and who are now hypocritically pretending innocence and concern for the welfare of Deutschland. As a result the latter is slowly being tortured to death. The eagle is, of course, intended to symbolize the Emperor, while the sycophant birds represent the other princes, primarily those responsible for the condition of Germany in the fifth decade of the sixteenth century, when the Reformation struggle was still in its zenith. On another occasion, in *Ein gesprech mit den 9 muese, wer doch ursprüncklicher ursacher sey der aufruer im Tewtschlant* (1553),<sup>16</sup> Sachs asks the muses for the prime causes of the plight in which the country finds itself and is told that Jupiter is becoming too lax in his regimen over the earth and that his evil councillors, as Faithlessness, Envy, Arrogance, Avarice, etc., have gained the day. These works present additional examples of Sachs' custom of calling attention to the crying evils of the time. Yet it is not the principle of *saeva indignatio*

<sup>15</sup> Keller-Goetze, Vol. 22, pp. 352 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 17-26.

that he applies; it is a higher form of satire, more kindly and more tolerant, but just as effective to boot.

Altho Hans Sachs was a member of the better middle class, he cannot, of course, be termed a Humanist. The mythological element, so apparent in the poems cited, is merely a literary influence of his forerunners and is used by him in order to present abstract facts in concrete form and thus to make them more intelligible to the average mind. But one cannot help suggesting yet another purpose hidden in this peculiarly naïve mode of exposition. Even the casual reader notes that in the majority of the works in which we are introduced to the celestial court of Jupiter, notably in *Ein artlich gesprech der götter, warum so viel ubler regenten auff erden sind* and again in *Ein artlich gesprech der götter, die zwietracht des römischen reichs betreffende* there is rank discord even among the gods, that Jupiter is quite helpless in the face of it, and that he is swayed by every new opinion as a weathercock by the changing wind. It seems, therefore, that this is nothing more than very subtle satire at the expense of the Emperor, who was in a very similar predicament. This conjecture is also borne out by another poem of the same kind: *Ein gesprech der götter wider den aufrüerischen fuersten margraff Albrecht und ander fürsten und stet Deutschlands* (1554).<sup>17</sup> Here again Jupiter is hard put to it by his colleagues for his laxness, but confesses his impotence in calling to account his many enemies, as Pluto, Proserpina and Mars, who do as they please. He can only hold forth promises for the future, after he has settled accounts with his worst adversary, Neptune—a hidden reference, it seems, to the Turkish miasma.

Other material relating to Sachs is so intimately connected with Goethe that discussion of it is postponed until a later chapter.

### *Reformation.*

By far the most momentous event of the time with which we are dealing, the Reformation, or as it is sometimes speciously called, the Protestant Revolt, evoked from all classes a

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 34-45.

mass of polemic literature, as was noted above. Not only the great immortal thinkers of the time, as Luther, Hutten, and Erasmus, but a host of insignificant, untalented small fry broke vociferously into print. There is a tendency to call their numerous products by a single appellation, satire, tho the majority of them are merely long-winded, jejune disquisitions on obscure points, provided with alluring but ungainly titles that were calculated to befool the reader. The theological chatter of these obscure writers does not concern us here; not so, however, their attitude toward the imperial temporal power.

#### *Hutten.*

It will first be in order to discuss to some extent the utterances and views of the more prominent agitators, Ulrich von Hutten and Martin Luther. Altho Hutten was the younger of the two, his span of life was destined to come to an end some twenty-three years before Luther's; consequently we take him up for consideration prior to the great Reformer. As Francke points out,<sup>18</sup> Hutten was a man of practical ideals, the most cherished of which was the centralization of the Empire. He constantly hoped for the dawn of a new era of national culture,<sup>19</sup> sounded the call, in his epigrams to Emperor Maximilian, against the foreign enemies of the Empire, especially Venice, France and the Pope,<sup>20</sup> and endeavored to unite the Emperor, princes, knights and cities in a great alliance for freedom.<sup>21</sup> Like Sachs and also Franz von Sickingen he represents the best ideals of his time by his patriotic admiration for the Empire, Germanic in its makeup and limits, and his clear-sighted discernment of its glaring weaknesses. In a poem entitled *Beklagunge der Freistette deutscher Nation oder Vormanung an die freien und reich Stette teutscher Nation*<sup>22</sup> he complains of the venality of the imperial crown at the elec-

<sup>18</sup> Kuno Francke: *Personality in German literature before Luther*, pp. 185-186.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>22</sup> D. N. L., Vol. 17<sup>2</sup>, p. 275 ff.



tion of Emperor Charles V., while in his *Clag und vormanung gegen dem übermässigen, unchristlichen gewalt des Bapsts zu Rom*<sup>23</sup> he speaks in a satirical vein (ll. 824 ff.) :

*Wie könt man auch regieren wol,  
Wenn wer das Reich nit pfaffen vol?  
Drumb steet es auch so wol im Reich,  
Und gschicht eim yeden recht und gleich!*

Similarly in the interesting *Dialogus oder gesprech büchlin die Anschawenden genant*, a colloquy between Sol and Phaeton, the author waxes satirical. Speaking of the general discord in the Empire, Sol says:<sup>24</sup> *Es sind auch zwischen jren* (i. e., of the Germans) *Fürsten zwitteracht und stetes heymlich krieg, in welchen sye sich verderben.* Phaeton asks: *Mag dann der Keyser die nit stillen?*, whereupon Sol answers: *Sölt der sye stillen, so sye jm nutz seind? Dann wo sye sich nit also untereynander verderbten, wären sye jm vil zu mächtig.*

#### *Luther.*

Preserved Smith makes the statement<sup>25</sup> that Luther "cared little or nothing for politics in themselves, partly because of his direct reliance on God, partly because he felt himself ill qualified to advise on such matters." As is frequently the case when one considers a voluminous writer, especially one of Luther's temperament, a dogmatic statement of this kind may be fortified by quotations, but again may be refuted by others. An apathetic attitude on the part of Luther toward politics may for example be attested by citations from his letter of March 5, 1522, to Frederick, Elector of Saxony,<sup>26</sup> in which he argues strongly against any opposition to the Emperor; from another letter of December 12, 1530, to the Elector of Saxony,<sup>27</sup> in which, after the formation of the League of Schmalkalden, he opposes extra-legal means of resisting the

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 247-248.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.

<sup>25</sup> *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, p. 214.

<sup>26</sup> *Frankfurt-Erlangen Briefe*, Vol. I., p. 108.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 201.

Emperor and the Catholics; from a third letter to the same addressee, dated March 6, 1530,<sup>28</sup> which maintains that the Emperor must be obeyed at all events while he holds his position; and from the words of a letter of May 29, 1523, to Elector Frederick:<sup>29</sup> *(ich) mag E. K. G. mit gutem Grund schreiben, dass mein Gemuth und Meinung . . . nie gewesen, auch noch nicht ist, Jemandes von hohen oder niederen Ständen zu schmähen, oder ichts zu schreiben oder lehren oder predigen, das zu Bewegung, Ungehorsam, Uneinigkeit und Aufruhr im heil. Reich oder die Christen-Menschen in Irrung zu fuhren, Ursach geben muge, dawider ich auch oftmal hart geschrieben und gepredigt habe.* On the other hand a strong case may be evolved to show Luther's varied, kaleidoscopic activity in the field of politics. Georg Jäger, for instance, in an article on the subject<sup>30</sup> cites the letter of July 13, 1521, to Melancthon<sup>31</sup> to prove this contention. A letter to Lazarus Spengler of February 15, 1531,<sup>32</sup> written soon after the deliberations at Torgau, at which Luther had allowed himself to be convinced of the righteousness of an appeal to force against the Emperor, furnishes additional proof. Soon after his anti-imperial, quietistic *Zwei keyserliche uneinige und wydderwertige Gepott* of 1524<sup>33</sup> the seriousness of the Turkish danger, too, became apparent to him, and he wrote in 1526 *Ob Kriegsleutte auch ynn seligem Stande seyn künden*<sup>34</sup> and in 1529 *Vom Krige wider die Türken*,<sup>35</sup> urging upon all Christians a cessation of internal hostilities for the purpose of meeting the common foe.

In many respects Luther is a typical representative of his time, an admirer of the imperial idea. We cannot, however, call him a conservative or a disinterested onlooker, but a much

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 138.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 165-166.

<sup>30</sup> *Die politischen Ideen Luthers und ihr Einfluss auf die innere Entwicklung Preussens*—in *Preuss. Jb.* 1903, Vol. 113, pp. 210-275.

<sup>31</sup> De Wette, Vol. II., p. 23.

<sup>32</sup> *Frankfurt-Erlangen Briefe*, Vol. II., p. 213.

<sup>33</sup> Weimar ed., Vol. 15, p. 254 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 19, p. 623 ff.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 30<sup>2</sup>, p. 107 ff.

concerned, critical spectator of events. On the whole he bore no malice to the Emperor, as he assures the Elector of Saxony on April 16, 1531,<sup>36</sup> alleging that in his pamphlets he wishes only to impart Christian instruction and to discover the evil practices and abuses perpetrated in the Emperor's *name*. To Nicholas Hausmann (June 16, 1533), too, he confesses reverence for the Emperor, and in the *Warnunge an seine lieben Deutschen*<sup>37</sup> he speaks of his "beloved Emperor Charles," who has won the respect and affection of the whole world. Yet in dealing with the Emperor as with aught else Luther was extremely candid. When for example Charles V. styled himself the chief protector of the Christian faith, Luther angrily rejoined in *Zwei keyserliche uneinige und wydderwertige Gepott*.<sup>38</sup> *Denn hie sihestu, wie der arme sterbliche Madensack, der keyser, der seyns lebens nicht eyn augenplick sicher ist, sich unverschampt rhümet, Er sey der ware ôbrister beschirmer des Christlichen glawbens.* To Johann Ludicke, February 8, 1539,<sup>39</sup> he speaks of the Emperor as one of the "heathen tyrants"; in the *Warnunge an seine lieben Deutschen* he warns the Emperor not to resort to arms against the Evangelicals and renounces his allegiance to the former:<sup>40</sup> *Wiltu aber dein Tauffepflicht und Christlichen bund mit Christo gemacht nit halten, sondern verfolgen, So sey dir ein schalk an meiner stat gehorsam, Ich wil umb deinen willen nicht meinen Gott lestern und sein wort verfolgen.* Elsewhere in the same work<sup>41</sup> he abuses the Emperor for being a mere puppet in the hands of the Pope. To Jonas (March or April, 1540)<sup>42</sup> he says that "the Emperor was, is, and ever will be a servant of the servants of the devil," and to Amsdorf (Oct. 21, 1545)<sup>43</sup> he calls him a miscreant (*nequam*). It is apparent, then, that to some

<sup>36</sup> Frankfurt-Erlangen *Briefe*, Vol. II., p. 224.

<sup>37</sup> Weimar ed., Vol. 30<sup>8</sup>, p. 291. Cf. also Frankfurt-Erlangen, Vol. I., pp. 109, 115; Vol. II., p. 1, and Weimar ed., Vol. 18, p. 357.

<sup>38</sup> Weimar ed., Vol. 15, p. 278.

<sup>39</sup> Enders-Kawerau *Briefwechsel*, Vol. 12, p. 87.

<sup>40</sup> Weimar ed., Vol. 30<sup>8</sup>, p. 299.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

<sup>42</sup> De Wette, Vol. V., p. 275.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 764.

extent Luther contradicts himself in the course of his life on the subject of temporal power and its head. Without being able to discuss this phase of the topic any further at present, we refer merely to a good treatise on the subject by Erich Brandenburg.<sup>44</sup>

Concerning the future of Germany Luther was very pessimistic. He wrote to Lauterbach on one occasion (Nov. 10, 1541)<sup>45</sup> that he almost despaired of the Empire; a similar sentiment he expressed to Jonas (Mar. 7, 1543).<sup>46</sup> What caused him the greatest anxiety was the absolute lack of national feeling among the native princes, a condition for which Grisar,<sup>47</sup> whose attitude toward the Reformer is, of course, anything but congenial, largely blames Luther himself, charging that the Reformation drove a wedge into German unity and favored particularism, which replaced the national ideal. This pessimistic crotchet of Luther weighed heavily upon him and in time developed into a fixed idea that the end of the world was nigh, with chief reference, no doubt, to the Holy Roman Empire. He communicated his apprehension to the Duke of Saxony (Feb. or Mar., 1530),<sup>48</sup> saying that the end was so close at hand that he would hardly be able to complete his translation of the Bible. *Denn das ist gewiss, dass wir in der heiligen Schrift nichts mehr zeitlichs Dings zu gewarten haben. Es ist alles aus und erfüllet: das romisch Reich ist am Ende, der Türck auf Hohest kommen, die Pracht des Papstthumbs fället dahin, und knacket die Welt an allen Enden fast, als wollt sie schier brechen und fallen. Denn dass itzt dasselbige romisch Reich unter unserm Kaiser Carolo ein wenig aufsteiget und mächtiger wird, denn es lange Zeit her gewesen ist, dunkt mich, es sei die Letzte, und fur Gott eben ein Ding, als wenn ein Licht oder Strohhaln gar ausgebrannt itzt verlöschen will, so gibts eine Flamme von sich, als wollts allerest recht anbren-*

<sup>44</sup> Martin Luthers Anschauung vom Staate und der Gesellschaft, Halle, 1901.

<sup>45</sup> De Wette, Vol. V., p. 407.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 548.

<sup>47</sup> Luther, Vol. II., p. 80. Translation, p. 100.

<sup>48</sup> Frankfurt-Erlangen Briefe, Vol. II., p. 134.

nen und eben mit demselbigen gehets aus, gleichwie die Christenheit itzt auch thut mit so hellem Evangelio. The *Tischreden* often touch the same theme. Speaking of the destruction of the Jews, Luther says:<sup>49</sup> *So wirt es in Germania auch gehen. Ich halt, es werde magna caligo volgen post hanc lucem, und darnach werde der jungste tag komen.* Similarly, in a fit of pessimism, he speaks of the fall of Rome<sup>50</sup> and the subsequent attempts to rehabilitate the city and the Empire: *der babst flicket bis auf den heutigen tag auch doran und kan sie nicht widr zu recht bringen. Also wirt er (i. e., unser Herrgott) mit Deutschland auch thun, wirt die fromen also hin nemen und darnach mit Deutschem land ein ende machen; denn es hat die straf jhe wol vordienet, und ist noch keines auffhörens.* On another occasion he compares the Empire to Troy,<sup>51</sup> and still another time he quotes the prophecy of Daniel.<sup>52</sup>

The lack of a good ruler, too, weighed on his mind. He says<sup>53</sup> that Germany is doomed to destruction because its princes are uneducated, but that if it were under one efficient sovereign, i. e., if it had a centralized government, it would be invincible.<sup>54</sup> The Emperor, he claims,<sup>55</sup> possesses less power than an ordinary king and lacks every decent source of income. The Imperial Court of Justice, too, aroused his unfavorable comment, for he considered it an instrument of the devil. He says in *Vermahnung zum Gebet wider den Türken* (1541):<sup>56</sup> *Ich wil nicht heucheln, sondern die warheit sagen, Das keiserlich kamergericht Sihe, welche eine teuffels hure da regirt so es doch solt, als ein Gottlich kleintot ynn Deudschen landen, ein einiger trost sein allen denen so unrecht leiden.*

From the material above presented it appears that Luther,

<sup>49</sup> *Luthers Tischreden in der Mathesischen Sammlung*, Kroker, p. 291.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>51</sup> Weimar ed., *Tischreden*, Vol. I., p. 452.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 637. Cf. also Vol. III., pp. 546 and 554. Cf. also Erlangen ed. Vol. 41, p. 233.

<sup>53</sup> Weimar ed., *Tischreden*, Vol. II., p. 518.

<sup>54</sup> Kroker, p. 414. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

<sup>55</sup> Weimar ed., *Tischreden*, Vol. II., p. 404.

<sup>56</sup> Weimar ed., Vol. 51, p. 589. Cf. his words on the Imperial Diet, Weimar ed., Vol. 30<sup>8</sup>, p. 285.

altho an ardent patriot, and a passionate lover of his country, remained true to his virile, positive nature in that he saw all the failings of the Empire and presented them in his own original way.

Only one pamphlet of his remains to be considered, *An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation von des christlichen Standes Besserung* (1520),<sup>57</sup> a product of his earlier period, but one of his masterpieces. Here he demonstrates among other things that the Roman Empire proper has long ago disappeared from the face of the earth. When the Pope realized, continues Luther, that he was unable to exercise his power and influence over the Eastern line of rulers, he robbed them of their prerogatives and transferred the diadem of the Cæsars to the doughty, unspoiled German race, planning to crush the latter under his heel. He succeeded in this plot, soon drove the Teutons out of Italy, and left them only an empty, meaningless name. (*Der deutsche Kaiser*) *Sal Romischer keyszer sein, und dennoch Rom nit ynnen haben, dartzu alletzeit ynz bapsts und der seinen mutwillen hangen und weben, das wir den namen haben, und sie das land und stedt, den sie altzeit unszer eynfeltichkeit miszpraucht haben zu yhrem ubirmut und tyraney, und heissen uns tolle Deutschen, die sich effen und narren lassen wie sie wollen.* Luther urges as a remedy not the relinquishment of the Empire, but an efficient centralized regimen according to independent German ideals. A theory which well summarizes his views on the subject.

#### *Pamphlets.*

Anonymous Reformation pamphlets, spread broadcast over the country, became a daily event in the third decade of the sixteenth century. Many of them are preserved to us, yet it is safe to assume that the majority fell into rapid oblivion soon after their appearance. We naturally expect to find in them much bold and outspoken, altho at times ephemeral sentiment on the engrossing problems of the day. And so it is.

<sup>57</sup> Weimar ed., Vol. 6, p. 462 ff.

The Protestant cause has probably been favored by time in the number of friendly pamphlets preserved. In these works complaints against the Pope are very frequent. So for example *Ein Spruch von dem bösen Misbrauch in der heiligen Christenheit entstanden*,<sup>58</sup> dating probably from the year 1525, is bitter against Rome but hopes that *Karl der durchleuchtig held* will call a general council to relieve the situation, while the Protestant song of 1541 with the satirical title: *Ein Getichte darin angezeigt wird wie from Herzog Heinrich von Braunschweig und wie böse die Lutherischen sein*<sup>59</sup> repines at the imperial court of justice because it contains so many vain priests, altho again referring to *den fromen keiser ausserkorn*. An interesting piece of ribaldry at the expense of the Empire is the *Dialogus So Franciscus v. Sickingen vor des Himels Pforten mit Sant Peter und dem Ritter Sant Jörgen Gehalten zuvor und ehe dann er eingelassen ist worden* (1523).<sup>60</sup> The good knight v. Sickingen finds in the two personages that accost him very eager listeners, so he proceeds not without splendid irony and satire to give a lengthy disquisition on the makeup and nature of the Holy Roman Empire, which he has just left behind. He tells of the imperial head, not only of Christianity, but of all nations,<sup>61</sup> and calls him a pious and sensible man, who is, however, embarrassed on all sides by selfish and grasping minor potentates. The latter, he says, consider themselves supreme and refuse to pledge allegiance to the Emperor, thus causing anarchy and confusion everywhere. To the question of St. George, *Was ist das camergericht?* he answers:<sup>62</sup> *Es ist ein solch ding: wer von dem undergericht als dem fegfeuer erledigt ist, der kompt erst in die hell gar mit einander. dann ich mein warlich dass kein seel in der hell von den teufeln harter geplagt mög werden, dann wann ein armer den procurator, advocaten und dem selben rostigen haufen zu teil wirt, dann da sint so vil action, exception, re-*

<sup>58</sup> Schade, Vol. I., p. 37.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 52 ff.

<sup>61</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

*plik, duplik, triplik, quadruplik, dilation, peremptoriales ferie in novis prefaxis und ordinariis, also dass kein entledigung ist: es muss blüt und fleisch alles verzert werden. kumpt under hunderten einer zum endurteil, so muss er die excution und volstreckunge bei der von Ochsenstein küchenmeister süchen . . . uss solchem mangel der gerechtigkeit volgt, wo eins armen mans vermögen nit ist, disem langen und unaussdreglichen pracht usszüwarten, dass er im fürnimpt ein vede, feintschaft oder krieg.*

Another pamphlet<sup>63</sup> is in the form of a parody of papal and imperial documents, chiefly of the former, and represents an edict of Lucifer: *Wir Lucifer, an di gnad gotes storer der heiligen christenheit, guter siten und dugenden, etc.*,<sup>64</sup> while another gives the papal party satirical advice how best to ruin the Empire.<sup>65</sup> Still another<sup>66</sup> ridicules the paltry financial income of the Emperor and speaks of using a sum ten times as great as the latter's annual revenue for the purpose of keeping churches in order, while *Die Lutherisch Strebkatz* (1524)<sup>67</sup> asks for the name of a single Pope within the past four hundred years who stood by the Emperor.

Some of the best direct satire against the Empire contained in the Reformation pamphlets occurs incidentally. For instance, in the *Gesprächbüchlein von einem Bauern, Belial, Erasmo Rotterdam und Doctor Joh. Fabri* (1524) the last two are severely attacked because of their infidelity to the new Lutheran doctrines. Belial, the devil and friend of the Papists, tells the peasant that Fabri, the vicar general of the Bishop of Constance, has been appointed a privy councillor by the imperial *Statthalter* Archduke Ferdinand. The peasant answers:<sup>68</sup> *Ei, Belial, was sagstu? sol eyn solcher holtseliger, keuscher Nonnentröster so bald zu grossem gewalt kommen,*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99 ff.

<sup>64</sup> *Himmelsbriefe* and *Teufelsbriefe* purporting to come from heaven or hell, satirical imitations of imperial and papal documents were frequent in the Middle Ages; cf. Clemen, Vol. III., p. 355.

<sup>65</sup> Schade, Vol. 2, pp. 83-84 and 89-90.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 47.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>68</sup> Clemen, Vol. I., p. 327.



*das wir armen baurn uns vor iem nun so hart fürchten müssen? ei, darum stet es also wol im Römischen reich!*

Heinrich v. Kettenbach, a Protestant publicist of the time, is the author of *Vergleichung des allerheiligsten Herrn und Vater des Papsts gegen Jcsus* (1524). He admits<sup>69</sup> that at first the mutual agreement of Pope and Emperor succeeded very well, but claims that in recent times, since the Pope has amassed wealth, the Emperor has degenerated and with him his realm. *Ein Practica practiciert aus der heiligen Bibel auf viel zukünftig Jahr* (1524) by the same author, is a friendly but severe warning to the Empire, which in the past has been *blindt mit sehenden augen*.<sup>70</sup> It continues (p. 185): *Also hör sù, du armes reich, der Rhömer und aller welt knecht und spot! dein weysen haben geben ein nerrischenn rath zù Worms auff dem reichstag vor dem armenn kynd Karolo, genant Römischer Keyser, etc. (Er ist kayser, aber sein schultheysen regiern.)* The Empire had no justification, says the pamphleteer, in siding with the Pope in preference to Luther, and at the recent diet it "had porridge in its mouth and could not talk" (p. 192). The only answer, however, that the "German fool" can give to Luther's protests is (p. 193):

*Luther, lass unns Teutschen unverworn,  
Wir wöln bleyben der Römer narn.  
Sie haben unns das gestoln reich geben,  
Auff das unser leib, gut, eer und leben  
Sey nun alles jr eygen güt,  
Darumb wir so vil christen blut  
In streyitten vergossen hon,  
I'on got wartten wir keyn lon.*

#### *Rollenhagen.*

Georg Rollenhagen's *Froschmeuseler* was written probably as early as 1565, altho it did not see the light of publicity until thirty years later. It is interesting not only as a modern imitation of the Homeric *Batrachomyomachia* but as a valuable

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 131.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

picture of contemporary German conditions. As appears from the first part of the second book<sup>71</sup> it was Rollenhagen's intention to represent by the Frogs the North Germans and by the mice the South Germans. Aside from the very apparent allusions to the Reformation, the observations, political and otherwise, of Book 2 are for the most part intentionally general, still at times it is possible to detect references to the Empire and to specific political events. Rollenhagen shows, for example, that a change of religion usually carries with it a change of government. He discusses the relative merits of every form of government, democratic, aristocratic and monarchical, and concludes that a limited monarchy is the best. A country devoid of a powerful head, he says,<sup>72</sup> is doomed to failure in all its undertakings, and ill-advised wars, such as the imperial campaigns of the time surely were, leave only disaster in their wake.<sup>73</sup> Next to God's grace he praises freedom, cooperation and unity of purpose as the greatest national blessings. The lack of unity and identity of purpose in the batrachian realm, together with their concomitants, are strongly emphasized (Bk. 2, pt. 6, Chap. 1). Occasionally Rollenhagen undertakes a direct thrust at the Empire, as in one passage where he speaks of the desirability of good government:<sup>74</sup>

*Wenn auch wenig der besten man  
Des regiments sich nemen an  
Und alles mit vernunft regieren,  
Es muss jeder den vorteil spüren.  
So lang Rom, die berühmte stat,  
Auf diese weis auch riet und tat,  
Warn tun und lassen wol bestellt,  
Sie ward mechtig der ganzen welt.*

A comparison with latter-day conditions he deems unnecessary.

<sup>71</sup> Chap. VI. Goedeke. Vol. I., p. 216.

<sup>72</sup> Goedeke. Vol. II., pp. 40-41.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

That Rollenhagen often thought in terms of the Holy Roman Empire becomes apparent from several passages ostensibly dealing with the kingdom of the frogs. It appears that the realm of the latter is nothing more than an imitation of the imperial government, for not only the supreme ruler (the frog king) and his princes, but all the estates, nay also the seven Electors, are represented there. The ruler is even compelled to pledge himself to a sort of batrachian Capitulation:<sup>75</sup>

*Jedoch tet man nicht unbedacht,  
Wenn man ein solche ordnung macht,  
Das der könig auf seinem eid,  
Wenn er annem die obrigkeit,  
Zusagen müst, das ganze reich,  
Hohen und niedrigen stand zugleich,  
Frei zu lassen und zu beschützen  
Wider aller parteien trützen  
Bei der heiligen religion,  
Bei recht und gerechtigkeit fron.*

An imperial election conducted by the seven Electors is parodied, too. The dignified heptad convenes and in a stormy session tries to choose a frog king, but in vain, for an agreement is found to be impossible:<sup>76</sup>

*Also wankt alles hin und her  
Wie ein schiflein im weiten mer,  
Das ledig on ein herren schwimt,  
Das wasser und wind zum spiel aufnimmt.*

The sequel, finally, the speech of the stork, is in part at least a take-off on the speeches and documents of the German Emperor.

#### *Fischart.*

Johann Fischart is one of the most interesting figures of his time, a thorough patriot, honest in his hatred and contempt for the enemies of his country, the French and Span-

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

iards, but like his predecessors, Brant, Sachs, Hutten, Luther and Rollenhagen, never blinded to shortcomings at home. With enthusiasm he champions the greatness of his fatherland as well as political and religious freedom, but hates with all the virility of his nature the Roman Catholic Church. His *Eikones cum brevissimis descriptionibus*. . . . *Bildnussen oder Contrafacturen der XII Ersten Alten Teutschen König und Fürsten* appeared separately in 1573,<sup>77</sup> and a second time in 1581, revised and augmented, as a supplement to the *Emblematum Tyrocinia* of Mathias Holtzwardt. In this work there are a cut entitled *Germania domitrix gentium*,<sup>78</sup> an introductory poem *Ernstliche Ermanung an die lieben Teutschen* (pp. 387-389) and some closing verses *Erklärung beyder hie fürgemalter Teutscher Tugenden*. The former poem is a complaint against the decay of German glory and virtues. Germania, says the author, should be provided with a magpie instead of an eagle, a hobby-horse instead of a sceptre,<sup>79</sup> and a nursery ball instead of a globe. What boots it, he says, to praise one's glorious ancestors if one remains inactive oneself:

*Also was ist dir für eyn Ehr,  
Wann rühmst die Alten Teutschen sehr,  
Wie sie für ihre Freiheytt stritten  
Und keynen bösen Nachbarn bitten  
Und du achtest nicht der Freiheytt dein,  
Kannst kaum inn deinem Land sicher sein,  
Last dir dein Nachbarn sein Pferd binden,  
An deinen Zaun fornen und hinden!*

The second poem, the *Erklärung*, lauds steadfastness and fidelity as prime factors essential to Germany's unity and greatness. Fischart realizes, furthermore, that inner disruption

<sup>77</sup> Hauffen, Vol. I., p. lxxv.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 385.

<sup>79</sup> It is interesting to note that two hundred years later Hölderlin in a poem *An die Deutschen*, D. N. L., 1352, p. 443, expressed the same idea:

*Spottet ja nicht des Kinds, wenn es mit Peitsch' und Sporn,  
Auf dem Rosse von Holz, mutig und gross sich dünkt.  
Denn, ihr Deutschen, auch ihr seid  
Tatenarm und gedankenvoll.*

and discord were one of the chief troubles of the land; his verses to the *Bildnuss des Wohlgebornen Herrn Herrn Lasarus von Schwendi*,<sup>80</sup> in which he censures severely all Christians for their lack of concordant spirit, illustrate this view.

On one occasion, in the *Gargantua*, Fischart speaks to his own books and proudly points to the fact that even the Emperor reveres them, since they act as a check upon his conduct.<sup>81</sup> The oft-quoted stanza from the eighth chapter of the *Gargantua*.<sup>82</sup>

*Wolauff mit reichem schalle,  
Ich weiss mir ein Gesellschaft gut,  
gefällt mir vor anderen alle,  
sie trägt ein freien Mut,  
Sie hat gar kleine sorgen,  
wol umb das Römisch Reich,  
es sterb heut oder morgen,  
so gilt es jnen gleich.*

mentioned by most of the Faust commentators in connection with the song of Frosch and Brander's retort in *Auerbachs Keller*, is one of the many interludes in the *Gargantua* taken over from earlier sources. It was written by Jörg Busch of Nuremberg and appeared for the first time in 1551.<sup>83</sup> In connection with Goethe more will be said of it. That there were other versions of the song is shown by the *Trinklied* (1500-1550) in the *Wunderhorn*, Vol. II., p. 230, the fourth strophe of which reads:

*Wir han gar kleine Sorgen  
Wohl um das römisch Reich,  
Es sterb heut oder morgen,  
Das gilt uns alles gleich;  
Und ging es auch in Stücke,  
Wenn nur das Heu geräth,  
Daraus drehn wir ein Stricke,  
Der es zusammen näht.*

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Richard Siegemund in *Zeitschrift f. d. deut. Unterricht*, x., 233 ff.

<sup>81</sup> Alsleben, p. 444.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>83</sup> For complete data vid. C. A. Williams *Zur Liederpoesie in Fischarts Gargantua*, p. 56.

*Folksong and Miscellanea.*

Emperor Charles V. was variously judged by his contemporaries. Frequently he was attacked with great severity for his efforts against German civil and religious freedom. Rumors of every description were circulated by Protestants, for example that the Emperor hired cutthroats and incendiaries who pillaged Protestant lands;<sup>84</sup> books, circulars and pamphlets were spread broadcast purporting to be ancient prophecies telling of the wicked Charles V. and the condition of Germany in 1546-48. Some pamphlets show extreme hate toward him, but deep, sincere love for the fatherland; poems absolutely favorable to him are less frequent.<sup>85</sup> A lampoon of 1542 on the Empire, all the princes, estates, etc.,<sup>86</sup> quotes a relevant biblical motto for each. Under *Römischer Kaiser* it states: *Ein jedes Reich, so es selbst mit sich uneins wird, das wird wüste. Ich bin nicht gekommen, Friede zu senden, sondern das Schwert*, while to *Römisches Reich* is affixed: *Sie haben Mäuler und reden nicht, Ohren und hören nicht, Augen und sehen nicht, Nasen und riechen nicht; sie haben Hände und greifen nicht, Füße und wandern nicht*. In a song that appeared in the anti-imperial Magdeburg toward the middle of the sixteenth century<sup>87</sup> Charles V. and "his Spaniards," i. e., his Spanish troops, are ridiculed. Strophe 3:

*Zu Magdenburg auf der brucken  
da ligen drei hündelein  
si heulen alle morgen  
kain Spanier lassen si ein.*

Further (Str. 5):

*Zu Magdenburg auf der maure  
da ligt ein eisener man, (i. e., Otto the Great)  
will in der kaiser gewinnen  
sein Spanier müssen dran.*

<sup>84</sup> Johannes Voigt: *Ueber Pasquille, Spottlieder u. Schmähschriften*, etc., p. 484.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. e. g., Liliencron, Vol. III., Nos. 309-312.

<sup>86</sup> Voigt, p. 514 ff.

<sup>87</sup> Liliencron, Vol. IV., p. 516; Uhland, p. 552.

And finally (Str. 7):

*Zu Magdenburg in der werden statt  
da seind der büxen vil,  
si trauren alle morgen  
dass der kaiser nit komen will.*

More general references to the Emperor, unfavorable in their purport, are also very frequent. At times they take the form of satirical nursery rhymes:<sup>88</sup>

*Es geht ein Butzemann im Reich herum, Didum, Didum,  
Bidi, Bidi, Bum!  
Der Kaiser schlägt die Trumm  
Mit Händen und mit Füßen,  
Mit Sabeln und mit Spiessen!  
Didum, didum, didum!*

or again:<sup>89</sup>

*Zipperle pipperle bump,  
Der Kaiser ist e Lump,  
Er reitet über Feld  
Und bringt e Sack voll Geld.*

The *Sack voll Geld*, thinks Hildebrand (sub. *Kaiser* in Grimm's Wb.), refers to money that the Emperor is supposed to have borrowed. A satirical proverb: *er hat wol was, wenn der arme kaiser nur was hätte* is quoted by Simrock.<sup>90</sup> An examination of the longer, more ambitious historical songs of the time, as they appear in the *Wunderhorn*, in *Uhland* or in *Liliencron*, again discloses results similar to those revealed in the previous chapter. As far as sheer bulkiness is concerned, they are extremely promising, but upon close scrutiny reveal only a minimum of material of significant content. Here and there we find a thrust at the Empire, as for example in *Ein Lied von*

<sup>88</sup> Wolffs *Sammlung histor. Volkslieder*, p. 185.

<sup>89</sup> E. Meier *Deutsche Kinderreime und Kinderspiele aus Schwaben*, p. 39.

<sup>90</sup> *Deutsche Sprichwörter*, No. 5363. For a similar proverb, *Das Reich ist uneinig*, referring to disagreements of any kind between individuals or parties, cf. *ibid.*, No. 8319.

*Muhlhausen und der Eidgenossenschaft*, Liliencron III., 162 ff., of 1515, which warns the Swiss to preserve their unity, for (Str. 20):

*Uneinigkeit all reich zerstört,  
kan aber keins nicht machen.*

or in the song *Von Wullenwever und den regierenden Bürgern zu Lübeck* (1534), Liliencron IV., 100 ff., which depicts the Protestant rebellion led by the Hamburg merchant Jörgen Wullenwever. Strophe 4 describes how a mandate of the Emperor was received:

*des keisers torn men fruchte,  
eim rad daran misduchte;  
Hans Katte nam dat vor spodd:  
de keiser wer kein god.*

The last line became the watchword of the rebellion (Str. 5).

#### *Forster.*

Georg Forster, a friend of Luther, wrote his popular *Frische Teutsche Liedlein* toward the middle of the century. He, too, is on the whole a friend of the Empire, but is well aware of its critical condition. He says:<sup>91</sup>

*Wer ohren hat hör wie es Gât  
wenn ein reych soll zerfallen!  
Erstlich das haubt wirt gar beraubt  
Gott widerstrebt in allen  
Sein wort es hast in wollust rast  
lebt nach seim wil auff erden  
darumb spricht Got "bin ich dein spot  
zu schanden must auch werden!"*

The Turkish danger also was apparent to him, and in a lively *Türkenlied* (p. 164 ff.) of unusual freshness he urges the Empire to arouse itself from its somnolence.

<sup>91</sup> *Neudrucke*, Vols. 203-206, pp. 184-185.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE CENTURY OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

One event of paramount importance overshadows the whole seventeenth century, to wit, the Thirty Years' War. In science, in literature, in art, in every phase of human activity its baleful, retarding influence asserts itself. After the successful struggle led by Luther against the Catholic Italian Church and the ever strengthening resistance against the Turkish onslaughts had fully prepared the country for development along nationalistic, patriotic lines, the terrible cataclysm took place. What it did not destroy utterly it suppressed or left behind in mutilated, stunted form. This sad residuum, then, we shall examine for the purpose of finding material pertinent to our subject. That such matter should have been plentiful in an age in which political conditions were uppermost in the minds of men is quite apparent.

To be sure, even before the era of the Thirty Years' War national feeling, stifled by religious and political differences, was at its lowest ebb in Germany.<sup>1</sup> The popular writers as a rule had only a vague, general knowledge of German history and dwelt on hazy conceptions of an erstwhile German world dominion and the like.<sup>2</sup> Religious faith assumed almost a dominating rôle in the patriotism of the time; the struggle for Protestantism, which swept with it the greater part of the country, became practically synonymous with the struggle for patriotism.<sup>3</sup> A certain consciousness of the oneness, the solidarity of the Empire, moreover, which had always remained alive thruout the ages, was obliterated by the Thirty Years'

<sup>1</sup> Behrens, *Deutsches Ehr- und Nationalgefühl*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ditfurth, *Die historisch-politischen Volkslieder d. 30jährigen Krieges*, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> For a good discussion of the patriotism of the time vid. Wels, *Die patriotischen Strömungen in der deut. Literatur des 30jährigen Krieges*.

War, when brother fought against brother, and gave way largely to party feeling. But in spite of these unfortunate circumstances a general feeling of hatred and distrust of the French remained ever present in the popular mind,<sup>4</sup> while the friendship for Sweden, too, died out soon after the death of Gustavus Adolphus.<sup>5</sup> Fear and loathing of the Turks, of course, was as prevalent as ever. The learned literature of the time, laboring as it did under the influence of Humanism and late Stoic Eclecticism, reveals a certain studied apathy toward all things mundane, including the native land. Consequently this branch of letters is notably deficient in sincerity and warmth, a shortcoming which, combined with its non-committal timorousness, its fear and reluctance in expressing frank opinions, detracts from its general value and precludes the possibility of effective satire.

The importance and significance of the seventeenth century publicists for our topic were mentioned in the first chapter. Altho strictly speaking their works cannot be classed in the category of literature, they are extremely valuable as barometers of general opinion and as factors in shaping the public as well as the literary mind. Usually they were in advance of their time. The conception of the Emperor, for example, as possessed of unlimited world power, was quite general among the uninitiated until the eighteenth century. Still Conring questioned it as early as 1643 in his *De Germanorum Imperio romano liber unus*.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Hippolithus a Lapide.*

Four years later, in 1647, a lengthy disquisition entitled *Dissertatio de ratione status in Imperio Nostro Romano-Germanico*<sup>7</sup> appeared under the pseudonymous authorship of a

<sup>4</sup> H. Hitzgrath, *Die Publicistik des Prager Friedens*, p. 115; also Opel-Cohn, *Der 30jährige Krieg. Eine Sammlung v. histor. Gedichten u. Prosadarstellungen*, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Hitzgrath, p. 108. Diefurth, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

<sup>6</sup> Vid. Himly, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>7</sup> *Dissertatio de ratione status in Imperio Nostro Romano-Germanico, etc. Autore Hippolitho a Lapide, Freistadii, Anno 1647.* 583 pp.

certain Hippolithus a Lapide, who turned out to be a jurist by the name of Chemnitz and a Swede by birth. The book makes interesting reading even today because of its bold, iconoclastic proposals in regard to the imperial government. Right at the outset, in the preface to the reader, the author speaks of *funestam et cadaverosam hodiernae Germaniae nostrae faciem* and of the inexorable fate which holds men and empires in its grip. He is furthermore especially bitter against the antiquated judicial machinery, obsolescent statutes, and the discrepancy and diversity of the imperial legal code. In the main body of his work (p. 2) he assures his readers that no vain desire to satisfy a scholastic crotchet tempted him to write, but actual concern for the country. With contempt he disregards the traditional imperial glories and considers actual conditions and prospects. He treats the German constitution, such as it was, as a native growth and rejects all theories of imperial absolutism as absurd. The Emperor's power, he charges, had always been a menace to the land and in his own day it had become more so, altho (p. 290): *Nihil fere habet (imperator) nisi quod inane nomen ejus, et titulus, omnibus Imperii decretis praefigatur*.<sup>8</sup> He calls the Emperors harpies with rapacious talons (p. 426) and characterizes all their promises as empty verbiage, which will be realized only at the advent of the Greek calends (p. 352). The comparison (pp. 398-399) which he draws between the ancient Roman Empire of Cæsar and the Empire of his own day is very apt. Cæsar, he says, had all the power of an Emperor, but lacked the title; the latter-day Emperors possess only the name, for, in the words of Aeneas Sylvius,<sup>9</sup> the princes obey him only in so far as it pleases them, which is usually very little. The gravamen of the author's accusation, however, is the fact that the Hapsburg house had usurped too much power and had weakened the Empire for selfish motives. Consequently he urges, Part III.,

<sup>8</sup> Speaking of the imperial insignia he says, p. 395: *Simulacra vero Majestatis ea dicuntur, quae magnam quidem speciem prae se ferunt, ac inanis umbra, ut Plinius junior loquitur, et sine potestate nomen sunt; parumque Imperii ac potestatis, in se, revera continent.* Cf. Appendix A.

<sup>9</sup> *Germ.*, c. 43.

Chap. 2, the extirpation of the Austrian line, the *familia Germaniae nostrae fatalis* (p. 520). That he was after all a staunch patriot, a friend of the imperial idea in its best expression, and merely a hater of Hapsburgian absolutism and greed, is proved by the following quotation (p. 538): *Et quod Alexander Magnus ait, sicut in corporibus aegris, nihil quod nociturum est, Medici relinquunt: Sic nos, quicquid obstat Imperio nostro (cuius fundamentum Libertas, non unius arbitrium est) recidamus.*

*v. Pufendorf.*

The other epoch-making publicist of the time, Samuel von Pufendorf, or as he calls himself in his famous *De Statu Imperii Germanici* (1667),<sup>10</sup> Severinus de Monzambano, ostensibly an Italian, is likewise an iconoclast. In his sober, objective, matter-of-fact method, his independence of authorities and sources, and in his originality, he far surpasses Chemnitz. His work, the *De Statu*, is of additional importance because he proves that the Empire of his day could not be classified according to Aristotle's scheme and further because he exposes mercilessly the rottenness of the government, the systematic decay caused by the selfishness and apathy of the imperial estates. He shows real patriotic sorrow over the ruin of the once powerful Empire and with virile indignation attacks the egotistic un-German policy of the Austrian rulers, the ecclesiastical principalities in the midst of Germany, the petty particularistic spirit thruout the Empire, and the scholastic, Aristotelian theories of many of the contemporary publicists and political writers. Boldly he refutes the latter with the statement that the Empire is not a perfect organization, that it suffers from irremediable ills and that its constitution is a monstrosity.<sup>11</sup>

In the introductory letter to his fictitious friend Laelius he sarcastically indicates that the publicists of the time were

<sup>10</sup> Severinus de Monzambano, *De Statu Imperii Germanici*, ed. Fritz Salomon, Weimar, 1910.

<sup>11</sup> He calls the Empire, p. 126: *irregulare aliquod corpus et monstro simile*; it approaches nearest a federation of states, he says.

merely pedantic compilers, whose works are quite useless to the serious student. Hence he disregards them and visits the diet of Ratisbon, where he has a good opportunity of observing at first hand the incohesiveness of the Empire (p. 30). He is eager to prove (pp. 43-45) that the imperial coronation of Charles the Great was not actually a revival of the West Roman Empire; Charles the Great he calls of Germanic or Frankish origin altho the Emperor was a resident of Francogallia (p. 38). Practical-minded as he is, he considers only realities and ignores ideals, such as the theoretical union of Germany and Italy. The inaccuracy and contradiction involved in the title of the Emperor arouse his keen power of ridicule (p. 46): *Retinent tamen receptum semel vocabulum Reges Germaniae, utut dudum et coronationem Romanam omiserint et vix quidquam ex antiquae illius advocatae iuribus usurpaverint, quia Principibus solemne est, re citius quam titulo cedere.*

There are two editions of Pufendorf's work. The earlier is sharp and severe against the House of Hapsburg, the later, the posthumous redaction, is much milder in this respect. Naturally the original version is the more interesting of the two and is the basis of the present discussion. Similarly to Chemnitz Pufendorf decries the greedy methods of the Austrian Emperors and attacks their luxuriant *Hausmacht*. He is also bitter against the secular potentates for their warlike spirit (pp. 60-61) and their independence of the Emperor (p. 71), and speaks with sarcasm of the imperial knights, who draw large incomes for doing nothing (p. 65). In fact, he asserts that one of the greatest weaknesses of the Empire is the inordinate power of the nominally dependent princes (pp. 74-75). In regard to the vexing dilatoriness of the imperial diet in its action on the *Wahlcapitulation* he waxes satirical (p. 89). Since some people, he says, might ask what so many deputies at the diet had accomplished in times of peace besides drinking wine, this insoluble, labyrinthine puzzle, the capitulation, was devised in order to furnish useful material for fruitless discussion! He also jokes in a good-natured way over the fact that expired fiefs accrue to the imperial treasury, a case

in which the country for once offers its Emperors something more than a mere title (p. 92). The Imperial High Court of Justice at Speyer is not left unscathed, either.<sup>12</sup> The last section of his work, finally, is taken up with a refutation of many of the proposals of Chemnitz to improve general conditions, as well as with a very able catalogue of the defects and weaknesses of the imperial government.

### *Theobald Hock.*

Like many writers of the time Theobald Hock, the author of the *Schoenes Blumenfeld*, was a *laudator temporis acti*, an admirer of those supposititious times that never existed. To some extent, of course, this poetic weakness is inbred in man; however, when it becomes too frequent and too obtrusive in any age, there is always reason to suspect that it was consciously impressed into use as a literary device. This seems to have been the case with Hock. He speaks, for example, of the mythical first king of Germany, Tuitschon<sup>13</sup> in whose regime justice was administered impartially and promptly, wedlock was considered sacred, dresses were simple and modest, houses were built for use and not for ostentation, and usury and perjury were unknown. "Compare this with conditions in the present Empire!" he exclaims. Chapter 33 of his *Floral Field* complains of the superabundance of imperial councillors who are of no use, and puns on the words *raten*, *erraten* and *verraten* (p. 49). The endless procrastination, venality and sophistry of the courts is the subject of the following chapter, No. 34 (pp. 50-52), while Chapter 39 (p. 58) mourns over the fact that only money and influence win recognition, whereas efficiency is allowed to go begging. Of what avail, asks Hock, are laws and regulations if no one obeys them? (p. 59).

<sup>12</sup> He quotes the following pun and says further, p. 107: *Vulgo lites Spiraë dicuntur spirare sed numquam expirare; cuius rei causa est: tam immensae ambages processus, tam causarum multitudo et paucitas assessorum, sed praeprimis, quia deficit ut plurimum facultas exequendi sententias.*

<sup>13</sup> *Von des Tuitschon Policy*, Chap. 87, Koch ed., p. 125 ff.

*v. Dohna.*

Satire such as is quoted above from Theobald Hock, which deals with general customs, as for example habits of dress, is a favorite genre in the seventeenth century. Usually it goes under the name of satire *à la mode* and is intimately related, too, to the many learned societies of the time, which advocated purer speech. On the whole it may be called social in its restrictions, altho it occasionally touches upon the miseries of the war; only in rare instances does it deal at all with politics. One notable example of an exceptional case of the latter kind is the poem of Abraham v. Dohna entitled *Historische Reimen von dem ungereimten Reichstag Anno 1613*.<sup>14</sup> At the diet in question, which met at Regensburg, the election of Ferdinand II. to the office of Roman King was fruitlessly debated under the leadership of Bishop Khlesl, but the usual petty quarrels and insurmountable differences made an agreement impossible.<sup>15</sup> Dohna, a confirmed Protestant from East Prussia, was present at the diet and described his experiences first in ambassadorial letters, then in his satirical poem written in a free Alexandrine measure. The work is very caustic in its tone and impugns the mutual distrust of the two religious factions and the vain, ineffectual deliberations of the princes, prelates, ambassadors, and small fry.

*Official Documents.*

That Dohna had good reason to scoff at the tactics of the imperial legislature is very evident. As we shall see, this subject as well as the dilatory courts loomed large in literature long before Goethe's day. And turning again to the sources, i. e., the imperial documents themselves, we find even there indications of actual conditions. Dumont-Rousset, for example, reports<sup>16</sup> a most childish dispute which took place in the Diet of Deputation of 1681 at Frankfurt in regard to a petty ques-

<sup>14</sup> Anton Chroust, *Dohna, s. Leben u. s. Gedicht auf d. Reichstag v. 1613*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Chroust, *Der Reichstag v. 1613*.

<sup>16</sup> *Ceremonial of the Imperial Court—Dumont Suppl.*, Vol. IV., p. 742.

iton of the seating order of some ambassadors and deputies.<sup>17</sup> Patriots, says Dumont, complained relative to the incident that the Empire had never been worse off, while other less interested spectators made all sorts of pertinent jests. The cumbersome judicial proceedings of the time are also betrayed by an official document, viz., an agreement between Margrave Albrecht the younger of Brandenburg and the city of Nuremberg, according to which the latter agreed to pay the Margrave 200,000 *Reichstaler* on condition that hereafter he keep the peace. The third article of the document reads:<sup>18</sup> *Zum dritten nachdem sich zwischen dem löblichen Haus Brandenburg dieser Landes-Art und gemeiner Stadt Nürnberg mancherley Nachbarlicher Irrung und Spenne in- und ausserhalb Rechts halten sollen bemelte Spenne und Irrungen alle und jede wie die bis auf heutigen Tag herkommen unerörtet hangen und genannt werden keine ausgenommen hiemit von wegen beyder unser gnädiger Herren Marggraff Albrechten und Marggraff George Friedrichen und der Stadt Nürnberg von dem langwirigen rechtlichen Austrag genommen abgeschafft und zu gütlicher Verhöre und Handlung . . . hiemit geschoben und gestellet seyn.* It furnishes only one example in many of how litigants were practically forced to settle their difficulties among themselves because of the inefficiency of the imperial courts.

#### *Weckherlin.*

Georg Rodolf Weckherlin, who lived during the first half of the seventeenth century and who is sometimes considered a forerunner of Opitz, spent much of his time in England, but never lost touch with his native land. In 1633, after the death of Gustavus Adolphus, he wrote a poem in praise of the deceased king for his services to Germany.<sup>19</sup> Several patriotic poems, too, came from his pen; one of them, *An das Teutschland*,<sup>20</sup> contains an earnest admonition to the country to break

<sup>17</sup> Cf. also *ibid.*, Vol. V., p. 758.

<sup>18</sup> Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, Vol. IV., pt. 3, p. 37.

<sup>19</sup> Goedeke. *Gedichte v. G. R. Weckherlin*, p. 230.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.



its cruel fetters, to take new courage, and to withstand the forces that tend against freedom. Another work of Weckherlin, *An Herren Theodor de Mayerne*,<sup>21</sup> is addressed to the then noted personal physician of Henry IV. of France, who later became a favorite of James I. of England. It is assigned by Goedeke to the early part of the Thirty Years' War, before the death of James I. (1625). Here Weckherlin compares the body of the Empire to a human organism. In both, he asserts, it is possible to see how idleness breeds shame, how shame generates discord, how discord causes revolt, how the latter in turn brings on infirmity and finally death. But if, on the other hand, the evil influences are thru God's grace overcome by good counsel, by the help of head and hand, health, peace and joy will soon return to a land as well as to a human body. Continuing he says:

*Ach nüm das teutsche reich, das jetz in seinem blut  
ganz zaghaft, trostlos, schwach mit des tods band umfängen,  
Mayerne, deinen rat allein getreu, weis, gut;  
So solt es nicht allein trost, hilf und heil empfangen,  
sondern sein herz, hand, hirn, von zagheit, schwachheit, wut  
gefreit, solten noch unsterblichkeit erlangen.*

#### *v. Logau.*

Friedrich v. Logau, the prolific epigrammatist of the period, took a very similar attitude. By nature he was extremely patriotic, but unfortunately he lived in an era when this sentiment could be expressed only by sighs and complaints and by rueful retrospection. Consequently he often bemoans the hard times in contradistinction to the better days gone by,<sup>22</sup> changes *Teutschland* into *Scheuland*<sup>23</sup> and calls it a repository for the dregs of all nations,<sup>24</sup> a victim of the plundering sol-

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

<sup>22</sup> Gustav Eitner, *Friedrichs v. Logau Sämmtliche Sinngedichte*, Bibl. Lit. Ver. Stuttg., 113, No. I., 1, 71, p. 25; also No. I., 1, 90, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, No. I., 3, 52, p. 67.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, No. I., 6, 18, p. 121.

diery,<sup>25</sup> an inebriate<sup>26</sup> and a paradise for plunderers.<sup>27</sup> He attacks the Emperor for taking unfair advantage of the peasantry in time of war<sup>28</sup> and doubts whether the Peace of Westphalia will be as longeval as the war which it concluded.<sup>29</sup> All other nations, he says, acted as grave-diggers for Germany<sup>30</sup> and are still eagerly engaged in preventing new spirits of life from entering the defunct body, lest it arise in its wrath and inhume them.

### *Moscherosch.*

The *Gesichte Philanders v. Sittewald* of Moscherosch present a good example of the so-called *à la mode* satire, for they are directed mainly against the social evils of the day. But here again, as in the case of Logau, Weckherlin and Hock, we have an admixture of social and political satire. It appears, indeed, that no writer of the time, no matter what may have been his interests, his hopes and his ideals, could avoid touching upon political conditions. We may turn to such extremes as the Jesuit priest Jacob Balde<sup>31</sup> and the philologist Justus Georg Schottelius,<sup>32</sup> and still we meet essentially the same thought. In the work of Moscherosch just mentioned we find several allusions, more or less direct, to contemporary conditions in the Empire. In the first section of the second part, for instance,<sup>33</sup> there is a prophecy to the effect that the day is approaching on which the once glorious Empire will perish and citizen will struggle against citizen, brother against brother. Gallic language and customs will win the day; the country will come under the foreign yoke. Only one hope remains, the

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, No. I., 7, 11, p. 140.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, No. I., 7, 16, p. 141.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, No. I., 7, 25, p. 143.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, No. I., 8, 41, p. 170.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, No. II., 5, 6, p. 313.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 608. Cf. also p. 206.

<sup>31</sup> In his *Silvae Lyricae*, IV., 3, he begs the pardon of Charles the Great because the Empire has sunk so low.

<sup>32</sup> In his *Horrendum Bellum Grammaticale Teutonum antiquissimorum*, p. 59, he preaches political unity, and p. 47 curses all who strive against that ideal.

<sup>33</sup> D. N. L., 32, p. 168.

advent of some heroic genius who can restore Germanic manners and usages to the people. Further on in the novel<sup>34</sup> Moscherosch tells the story of the young crown prince of Wassgau who receives from his dying father a golden apple with instructions to travel around the world for the purpose of discovering the biggest fool and presenting him with the apple. The son proceeds to carry out the behests of his father. He discovers that terrible, hopeless conditions prevail at the many imperial and royal courts to which he comes, that usually the rulers and nobles are no better off than the meanest lackeys, that they are harsh and unjust and that corruption and envy flourish in exuberance. But one land particularly arouses his attention.<sup>35</sup> "Donkeys rode on horses, sows on woodpeckers. It was a topsyturvy realm, indeed, more like unto a painting than a country. And as the young sire enquired about the king, they answered that they had quite forgotten who he was." The sovereign, it turns out, had been a reckless gambler and had lost his land by a single stroke of misfortune. The prince considers him a promising candidate, indeed, for the golden apple, but fails to find him.<sup>36</sup> Well may Moscherosch have had contemporary conditions in mind when he wrote his precious bit of satire, for Germany, too, was a subverted Empire frequently victimized by reckless rulers. It is a fact, moreover, as Biedermann shows,<sup>37</sup> that many subjects of the Emperor were not even aware of his existence.

### *Schlüsselroman.*

Thruout this era the so-called *Schlüsselroman*, the type which represents the ideal state, the Utopia, became popular not only in Germany but also in England and France. In truth, Germany was first subjected to its influence by translations, as for example of John Barclay's Latin *Argenis* by Opitz

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185 ff.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>36</sup> The motif of the search for a fool or fools was popular in the seventeenth century. Cf. Christian Weise's *Die drei ärgsten Erznarren*, Braune, Ndr. 12.

<sup>37</sup> *Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert*, Vol. 2, Pt. 1, p. 35 et passim.

(1626). Models such as Plato, Campanella and More were frequently used. The scene of these novels is always laid in some remote land, but the tendency is ever present in more or less conspicuous form to point to contemporary conditions at home.<sup>38</sup> In order to make this clear the authors occasionally published even a key or explanation of their work. Wieland's excursus on his *Abderiten* is a conspicuous example.

### Opitz.

Of the so-called learned poets, mentioned above, Opitz is probably the most noted. Gryphius, the dramatist, too, is still known at least by name. Siegmund v. Birken and Johannes Rist, however, are no longer familiar to the average reader. As was previously stated, one seeks in vain in the works of these authors frequent and bold references to politics. To be sure, Opitz wrote his *Trostgedichte in Widerwertigkeit dess Krieges*, but his statements are usually general. In the second book, for example, he speaks of the transitoriness of things mundane<sup>39</sup> and asks what has become of splendid Rome, the goddess of all empires, the head of the whole world. All that remains of it, he answers, is carrion. Again in the fourth book<sup>40</sup> he complains rather sarcastically of conditions in Germany:

*wir sind ja teutsch geboren,  
Ein Volck, das nimmermehr sein Hertze hat verloren,  
Dass vor der Zeit so viel den Kürtzern hat gejagt,  
Das nach der Römer Macht zum minsten nicht gefragt,  
Von dem viel Keyser auch den Frieden musten häuffen,  
Das noch auff diesen Tag ihr keiner an darff greiffen,  
Als wenn es ohngefähr fällt in sein eygnes Haar,  
Wie Carlen vor der Zeit dem Fünfften wissend war.*

<sup>38</sup> Christian Weise's *Die drei Hauptverderber*, for example, represents in the manner of the *Gesichte* of Moscherosch the plans of the Wendish king Mistevoi to destroy the German Empire by instigating religious quarrels and by taking advantage of the indifference and the social evils of the time.

<sup>39</sup>D. N. L. 27, p. 287.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 315.

*v. Birken and Rist.*

Siegmund v. Birken, it appears, was very optimistic about the future of Germany, for in two songs *Der Friede and Lied*,<sup>41</sup> written after the close of the Thirty Years' War, he prophesies eternal peace for the country now that the terrible slaughter is over. Germany has long enough been the victim of "base dissension," he says. Rist is somewhat more outspoken than his two contemporaries Opitz and v. Birken. Altho in the hymeneal song to his friend Christian Feustel<sup>42</sup> he praises the quietistic life and ridicules those who are concerned with politics and current events, he himself wrote *Germania's Klagelied*,<sup>43</sup> a soliloquy in the nature of Hans Sachs' dialogue *Ein clagred Deutschlands und gesprech mit dem getrewen Eckhart*. Germania bemoans her wretched lot; even her own children have turned against her, while Spaniards, Turks, French, Goths and Croatians are tearing her to pieces and mocking her besides (Str. 10). In his day Rist was also well known as a dramatist. Two of his dramatic works, or *Singspiele*, *Das friedewünschende Teutschland* (1647) and *Das friedejauchzende Teutschland* (1653) are preserved. In the former<sup>44</sup> the chosen Germanic heroes King Ehrenfest (Ariovistus), Claudius Civilis, and the dukes Hermann and Witekind are conducted to earth by Mercury in order that they may be convinced that ancient Germany has developed into a most magnificent and splendid empire. But the party is sadly disappointed, for it finds neither magnificence nor splendor, nothing save the misery of Queen Teutschland, who has been deceived, maltreated and fettered by Don Antonio, Monsieur Gaston, Signoro Bartholomeo and Herr Karel, Spaniard, Frenchman, Italian and Swede respectively. The surgeon Ratio status, representing the glibly deceptive politics of the time, will not cure her wounds, but Love and Justice intercede for her with

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 300-307.

<sup>42</sup> Johann Ristens Poetischer Schatzkatz, Hamburg, 1646, p. 120 ff.

<sup>43</sup> Müller's Bibliothek deutscher Dichter d. 17. Jahrhunderts, Vol. 8, pp. 60-61.

<sup>44</sup> Ed. H. M. Schletterer, Augsburg, 1804; described in Vogt u. Koch, II, pp. 23-24.

God, begging the latter to send back to her Peace and Hope. The play, says Max Koch,<sup>45</sup> reminds one of Frischlin's *Julius redivivus*, written a century earlier, with the significant difference that in the latter German conditions are found satisfactory by the celestial visitors, while in the former we are dealing with a type of satire.

### *Gryphius.*

Gryphius, the greatest dramatist of the time, usually avoids contemporary politics, but in the opening monologue of *Leo Armenius* the imperial general Michael Balbus, a conspirator against the Eastern Emperor, tells his fellow conspirators of conditions in the Eastern Roman Empire, of the discord of the princes, the ecclesiastical quarrels and the treachery of the council,<sup>46</sup> all of which Gryphius may well have written with a view to conditions prevailing in his own native land.

### *Folksong.*

More freedom in mode of expression and a note of sincere frankness can be detected in the popular songs of the time, altho as in the case of the previous centuries the major part of the material is pro-imperialistic. The Thirty Years' War, of course, overshadows all other events and becomes practically the exclusive subject treated. The poem *Wunderbarlich Gespräch unterschiedlicher Person*<sup>47</sup> of 1631 is in the form of a deliberation held by prelates and princes on how to receive the peace plans of Gustavus Adolphus and to bring about an honorable peace. The *Secretarius* summons the councillors; the Emperor, he says (Str. 6), who has issued the call is somewhat confused:

*Wie einer, ders heisst spielen,  
Ein Anderer derwilen  
Macht unverhofft Trumpf aus!*

<sup>45</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>46</sup> H. Palm, *Trauerspiele. Bibl. d. Lit. Ver. Stuttg.*, 162, p. 19.

<sup>47</sup> Dittfurth, *Die historisch-politischen Volkslieder d. 30jährigen Krieges*, No. 86, p. 224 ff.

The councillor, who is addressed, however, advises the Emperor to rely on his Jesuits and Spanish favorites, who are responsible for the quandary in which he finds himself. Finally, after the assemblage has deliberated at length but to no avail, Nelli Narr breaks in impatiently (Str. 46) and warns all those present that they are talking themselves into idiocy. In *Ein new Gespräch zwischen St. Petro und Carolo Magno im Himmel uber die itzigen Zeitlauffte*, 1631,<sup>48</sup> another Protestant song, Charles the Great, in heaven, wonders what has become of his Empire, for lawlessness and disorder seem to prevail where once law and order were observed. St. Peter volunteers an explanation. The contending parties, he says, pretend to be quarrelling about religion, whereas in reality the rapaciousness and contentiousness of the wicked Pope and his clergy are responsible for the trouble. The whole land is a dismal waste; everything is at the mercy of the soldiery. Upon hearing this, Charles the Great is furious and demands that St. Peter tell him what has become of the Emperor. The answer is satirical: An Emperor? Why, how could he, a mere papal domestic, redress wrongs? Surely he can fawn upon the Jesuits, torture their opponents and trample on old privileges promised by writ, but nothing more:

*Ein Irrer, der sein Eingeweide  
Zerwühlet sich mit eigner Hand,  
Hinschlachtet seine Freund als Feinde:  
Also ist Kaiser Ferdinand.*

Peter guarantees that an avenger in the form of Gustavus Adolphus will be sent. Another song entitled *Ein bittlich Gesang an Keyser Ferdinandum*<sup>49</sup> is of the same tenor. The anti-Swedish *Schwedisches Quodlibet*<sup>50</sup> makes Sweden responsible for the terrible ravages of war and in its half-German, half-Latin diction serio-comically charges (Str. 28):

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 90, p. 237 ff.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 26, p. 60.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 140, p. 200 ff.

*Es gilt ihm eben gleich  
 Quibus enervet artibus  
 Das heilig Römisch Reich.*

Hartmann's collection of folksongs<sup>51</sup> also contains several poems of the era that are unfavorable to the Empire. A good example is a fragmentary work of 1631, addressed to the Emperor, with the refrain *Warum sollt ich nit schwedisch sein?*<sup>52</sup> "Is there any good reason why I shouldn't be pro-Swedish, my worthy Emperor? Pray, do you observe your oaths and the highest laws of the land, or do you ride roughshod over everything? Haven't you made a diabolical covenant with the Pope to harry the Empire by constant wars? You are a puppet of the Jesuits, a hypocrite and a violator of pledges, you with your godless, accursed army!" A prose colloquy on the same subject also exists; another poem, too, deals with the same matter.<sup>53</sup> In the Royal Graphic Museum at Munich there is an etching depicting the murder of Wallenstein; appended to it are eight verses describing the subject.<sup>54</sup> The Duke of Friedland was a victim of Spanish intrigue and murder, says the writer, and without condoning Wallenstein altogether, he attacks the faithlessness of the Emperor. Other verses in the same tenor are even more bitter against imperial perfidy.<sup>55</sup> Wallenstein was wronged, they claim. After having reestablished the prestige and power of the Emperor, he was treacherously rewarded. A good warning to readers to flee from Austrian tyranny! *Der Kaiserlichen Gesang von Gross Glogau* (1642),<sup>56</sup> finally, is a humorous poem satirizing the imperial troops under Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria, who vainly besieged the Swedish garrison at Gross Glogau in Silesia. The soldiers are described as disgusted

<sup>51</sup> August Hartmann, *Histor. Volkslieder u. Zeitgedichte vom 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, 3 volumes.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., No. 65, pp. 280-282.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 283, dated 1632.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., No. 78, p. 304, dated 1634.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., Nos. 80-82, pp. 305-307.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I., No. 88, pp. 322-323.



these sections soon came to be considered characteristically imperial and were often referred to simply as "the Empire" in a restricted sense.<sup>2</sup> To the student the ten districts present a baffling variety of governments, systems of tolls, coinage, measures, and import and export regulations. Plenipotentiary powers, even of life and death, were in the hands of the ruthless princelings. The Emperor himself was powerless except in name. Whereas in the time of Frederick I. his annual income had been about thirty-six million marks, it had sunk in the eighteenth century to a paltry twenty-four thousand marks.<sup>3</sup> The lawful members of the imperial diet, the rulers and princes, no longer attended the legislative sessions in person, but sent insignificant delegates with written instructions to transact the petty business (p. 29). These sessions were sometimes attended by as few as twenty-five persons (p. 31). Conditions in the Imperial Court of Justice were no better. Important cases remained on the bulletin for decades and were choked off by endless red tape when they finally came up for decision (pp. 25-26). As early as 1620 there were fifty thousand civil cases hanging fire, while in 1772 this prodigious number had increased by one fifth (p. 32). One case involving real estate dragged on for 188 years and was finally dropped because the litigant families had become extinct. Often cases were simply given up by the court and referred to a local bishop or prince who might be one of the litigants.

The imperial army, too, presented a pitiable spectacle. It consisted of a motley crowd of some twenty thousand mercenaries, with no unity, no *esprit de corps*, not even homogeneous uniforms (p. 44). It was absolutely imperative that the staff of generals be composed of an equal number of Catholics and Lutherans, a fact which led to endless disputes (p.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Grimm Wb., Vol. 8, sub *Reich*. Cf. also the following passages in Schiller: Jonas, *Schillers Briefe*, III., p. 352: *Die Menschen sind freier, als in einer Reichsstadt zu erwarten war* (to Körner from Heilbronn). *Ibid.*, p. 353: *Es ist erstaunlich, wie es hier im Reich von Nachdrücken wimmelt* (to Götschen from Ludwigsburg). In *Wallensteins Lager* the sutler Gustel of Blasewitz says of her niece: *'s ist meiner Schwester Kind aus dem Reich* (5. Auftritt).

<sup>3</sup> Biedermann, p. 16. Hereafter referred to in text by page numbers.

45). Corruption prevailed in the quartermaster's department, and there was open rivalry and even hostility between the troop contingents from the various states (p. 48). The important fortresses of the Empire, Kehl, Phillipsburg and Mayence were sadly neglected and hence useless. The system of taxation was antiquated and unjust; the Emperor himself was powerless to enforce payments, being dependent entirely on the good-will of the petty rulers. Hence it often took several decades to raise even a single tax (pp. 52-54).

Thruout most of the eighteenth century, moreover, the presence of two powerful hostile sections within the Empire, Austria and Prussia, frustrated all hopes for unity. As was noted in the previous chapter in connection with Moscherosch, even the conception of the existence of a powerful Empire faded in the minds of men. Only the very small principalities looked to the Empire for help; the larger, more influential states considered it foreign. Biedermann<sup>4</sup> quotes Eggers' *Geschichte der Menschheit* as follows: "At best only the citizens of small imperial towns are still concerned about conditions in Germany. Every German likes to count himself among the Austrians, the Prussians, the Saxons, the Hanoverians, the Mecklenburgers; only those who have no special fatherland call themselves Germans." Contemporary national heroes were naturally unknown, the nearest approach being Frederick the Great. Some writers, many of them highly intelligent and influential, even went so far as to defend the schismatic, particularistic condition of the country and to call it a boon.<sup>5</sup>

Under the prevailing circumstances patriotism could, of course, exist only under severe handicaps. Hence not a single one of the great classical poets, Goethe, Schiller, Lessing or Wieland, can be termed a patriot in the accepted sense of the word. It is the same with their contemporaries in other fields of endeavor. Two noted exceptions, however, are the pub-

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-66. Cf. also Gervinus, *Geschichte d. deut. Dichtung*, 5. ed., II., p. 477 ff. and V., pp. 426-427.

licists Karl Friedrich v. Moser and Justus Möser, who were evermore filled with enthusiasm for their glorious country, altho fully realizing its shortcomings. They will be further considered in the following pages. The formal historians of the period, on the other hand, are quite worthless, for their works are dry, jejune, longwinded, and without sense of proportion.

### *Publicists.*

In the previous chapter attention was called to the fact that as early as 1643 Conring had questioned the theory of imperial world dominion. Not until one hundred years later, however, was the imperial idea actually ridiculed, namely by Joseph a Hontheim in his *Dissertatio inauguralis de Romanorum Imperatoris genuina idea* (Aug. Trevir., 1760), which displays a bolder, more original attitude than most similar works of the time. On the whole the publicists were either too shortsighted or too bigoted to see things as they actually were. Furthermore the theory of the balance of power had only recently been evolved and commanded considerable attention in books and periodicals.<sup>6</sup> It led to an absurd, fatuous notion that the Holy Roman Empire was an absolute necessity for the political balance of Europe and even called forth a pamphlet which pretended to prove that the Empire should take part in the War of the Austrian Succession for the sake of assisting in the re-establishment of the European balance.<sup>7</sup> Naturally men holding such distorted views took the Empire very seriously.

### *Rabener.*

In studying the history of German satire, a subject intimately related to our theme, one cannot help noting the gradual decline and degeneration of public life, courage, and outspokenness during the age preceding the classical period.

<sup>6</sup> Cf., e. g., L. M. Kahle, *Trutina Europae, quae vulgo adpellatur die Balance von Europa praecipua belli et pacis norma*. Göttingen, 1744.—Mentioned in *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1744, 19, pp. 175-176—answered in *Freimüthige und bescheidene Erinnerungen*, Leipzig, 1745.

<sup>7</sup> *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1746, 88, pp. 700-703.

Moscherosch, a contemporary of the Thirty Years' War, still attacked more or less openly the public abuses in state and society. Lauremberg, Rachel, and Logau followed his main tendency, but laid more emphasis on the outer signs of political decay, the contamination of speech and of general customs. Neukirch and Wernigke stressed this phase even more, while Rabener's subject matter may positively be called trifling. He himself frankly admits the difficulty of writing satire in his day.<sup>8</sup> The poet who dares use the satirical form, he avers, arouses the enmity and suspicion of all. "In Germany," he exclaims, "I don't dare tell a country schoolmaster truths which in London a Lord Archbishop must listen to in silence or else mend his ways." Yet his conception of satire is modest, indeed, for he deprecates all ridicule at the expense of the Government and the state religion.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Gleim.*

Gleim and his Halberstadt friends are characterized by a strong patriotic feeling for Prussia, which finds its best expression in the *Kriegslieder von einem Grenadier*, songs that exult in the defeat of the imperial troops in various engagements of the Seven Years' War. The usual appellation applied to the enemy is *Tolpatsch und Pandur* and the tone is entirely depreciative. "You are merely delaying your own destruction," says the poet to the imperial troops,<sup>10</sup> "and your powerful army is a joke in our eyes. You are skilled only in the tactics of flight."<sup>11</sup> In the hymn of victory after the battle of Rossbach<sup>12</sup> Gleim gives us a grimly half-humorous description of the various fleeing detachments and lauds his idol Frederick the Great to the skies. The song addressed to the

<sup>8</sup> *Sämmtliche Schriften*, 4. Theil, Leipzig, 1777, p. 11 ff.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18. Cf. also his essay *Vom Missbrauche der Satyre*, Schr., 1. Theil, esp. pp. 99-100.

<sup>10</sup> *Preussische Kriegslieder von einem Grenadier*, v. I. W. L. Gleim, ed. Sauer in *Deutsche Literaturdenkmale*, No. 4, p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Empress and Queen after the recapture of Breslau<sup>13</sup> seriously urges Maria Theresia to accede to good judgment, admit defeat and make peace. Her victorious foe, claims Gleim, is invincible anyway. In the latter statement we have the keynote to the poet's attitude in the entire collection. The songs are not so much satirical against the Empire *per se* as against the Austrian government, the haughty enemy of the demigod Frederick the Great.

### *Uz.*

In Uz and Cronegk, on the other hand, we note an elegiac tone, a plaintive expression of sorrow over the condition of the country. Especially Uz is affected by this mood again and again. In the poem *Das bedrängte Deutschland*,<sup>14</sup> for example, he inquires how long Germany will continue to mutilate its own person and how long it will serve as a football for others. He speaks with predilection of the good old times when the Germanic barbarians still struggled for liberty in their uncouth but valiant way<sup>15</sup> and regrets the deterioration of the country.<sup>16</sup> *An die Deutschen*<sup>17</sup> is a severe arraignment of the degenerate, effeminate character of Uz's compatriots in contradistinction to the bold, natural, hardy warriors of the time of Hermann. *An die Freyheit*, finally,<sup>18</sup> urges the German people to arise and shake off the shameful fetters of slavery imposed on the country by its enemies.

### *Hagedorn.*

Friedrich von Hagedorn, now chiefly remembered for his fables and Anacreontics, is the author of the humorous, satirical poem *Mezendore*,<sup>19</sup> which describes an imaginary subter-

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>14</sup> *Sämtliche Poetische Werke*, ed. Sauer in *Deutsche Literaturdenkmale*, No. 33, p. 39 ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56 ff.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124 ff.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153 ff.

<sup>19</sup> *Poetische Werke*, Hamburg, 1769, Vol. 3, pp. 54-57.

anean land having as subjects animals and trees endowed with reason. All that is necessary for acquiring the franchise in this realm is respect for the powers that be (Str. 2). The lion serves as monarch, the elephants are the councillors, and a giddy chameleon acts as chancellor, while the foxes and reptiles are ready at his beck and call (Str. 3). The ostriches and peacocks represent the knights, the oxen and cattle the townspeople, the sheep, marmots and pigs the peasants (Str. 4). Hagedorn closes with the ironical words:

*Der Unterthanen Unterschied  
In Thieren, Bäumen, Pflanzen,  
Ist, weil der Staat nach Würden blüht,  
Einstimmig in dem Ganzen.  
Was hier ein Amt zu führen hat,  
Dient sich und auch vielleicht dem Staat;  
Der scheint bekanntern Reichen  
Hierinnen fast zu gleichen.*

*Lichtwer and Kästner.*

Another fable-writer of the time, Magnus Gottfried Lichtwer, pokes fun at the dilatoriness of the imperial courts in a similar way. He says in *Das Reichsgericht der Thiere*<sup>20</sup> that the snake is the imperial bailiff, while his assessors are somnolent marmots, and that the lawyers are snails, who demand a respite of a century or more. Further:

*Man sagt, dass dies Gericht nie jemand Unrecht that,  
Und dass von ihrem Spruch nie Jemand appelirte,  
Denn eh' der Reichsschultheis ein Urtheil publicirte,  
Verstarb Partei und Advocat.*

In another poem, *Fabel 25, Die Flinte und der Hase*<sup>21</sup> Lichtwer similarly ridicules the backwardness of the authorities and compares the laws to a gun whose owner is asleep. His con-

<sup>20</sup> *Schriften*, ed. Pott, Halberstadt, 1828, Buch 2, S. 65.

<sup>21</sup> D. N. L., 73, p. 39.

temporary, Abraham Gotthelf Kästner, assumes the same satirical attitude.<sup>22</sup>

*Folksong and the Like.*

Sectional outbursts against the authority of the Emperor were comparatively rare, yet they occurred occasionally. An excellent example is the peasant rebellion of 1705-1706 in Bavaria, in which, as Hartmann tells us,<sup>23</sup> flags were borne thru the streets with the following legend:

*Wir wollen lieber bayrisch sterben,  
Als in des Kaisers Unfug verderben.*

A song of about the same time, entitled *Bayerland an seinen Kurfürsten in der letzten Audienz* (1703),<sup>24</sup> is a dialogue in which Bavaria tries to dissuade the Elector Emanuel from war against the Empire, but is answered by the ruler:

*Ich lass den Kaiser Kaiser sein,  
Und such gleichwohl am Reich das Mein!*

After the Peace of Rastatt (1714), which concluded the War of the Spanish Succession, the poem *Derer Europäischen Mächte erneuetes Friedens-Interesse*<sup>25</sup> was written to ridicule Emperor Charles VI. because he had expected more than he had received. H. Stoll<sup>26</sup> quotes Wilhelm Oncken, *Das Zeitalter Friedrichs des Grossen*, to the effect that at the death of Emperor Charles VI., the father of Maria Theresia, in 1740, the populace in Vienna no longer believed in the Empire and favored the cause of Elector Karl Albert of Bavaria, a participant in the War of the Austrian Succession. Banners were borne around the city:

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 102, where he mentions the unity and concord of German rulers as a chimerical dream.

<sup>23</sup> *Historische Volkslieder und Zeitgedichte*, II., p. 182.

<sup>24</sup> Diefurth: *Deutsche Volks- und Gesellschaftslieder des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, p. 115.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>26</sup> *Geschichtliches Lesebuch*, Hamburg, 1905, 2. Theil, S. 48.

*Vivat, der Kaiser ist tot.  
Wir bekommen jetzt grosses Brot.  
Der Lothringer ist uns zu schlecht;  
Der Bayer ist uns eben recht.*

Naturally the Seven Years' War called forth a mass of popular literature on both sides. Gleim's songs have already been noticed. The more outspoken, and hence more interesting, anonymous compositions remain to be considered. Very frequent in this period are songs composed by soldiers or partisans of Prussia and Frederick the Great, which satirize Austria, that is the Empire, and everything connected with it, especially its inefficient army. Ditfurth in his collection of folk-songs of the Seven Years' War cites several squibs at the expense of the imperial army. One of them says in a mocking tone that the poor, longsuffering imperial army is an object that could move even a stone to compassion;<sup>27</sup> it is incompetent and half starved, and instead of defeating Frederick the Great easily, as it had expected, not only it but the French army as well was worsted. Further (Str. 10):

*O du geschlagne Reichsarmee,  
Schrei mit den Franzen: Mondieu!  
B'hüt Gott uns vor der Preussen Muth  
Und schone unserm Heldenblut,  
O dass wir müssen weder heu'r,  
Noch künftig schmecken Preussisch Feu'r.*

Another similar song<sup>28</sup> claims that the chief fame of the Emperor's army consists in its ability to flee in the face of the enemy and speaks further of the rank cowardice of most of the contingents, advising them to return home. Facetiously the author states that a more appropriate name than *Reichsarmee* would be *Reissausarmee* (Str. 7). A third poem of the same type<sup>29</sup> alleges that the imperial soldiers have gained universal renown for faint-heartedness:

<sup>27</sup> Ditfurth, *Die historischen Volkslieder des siebenjährigen Krieges*, p. 36 ff.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.



*Weilen nämlich gleich weck, weck  
 Weck, weck, weck voll Angst und Schreck,  
 Liefst durch Distel, Dorn und Dreck,  
 Hast nicht einmal still gestanden.*

Still another<sup>30</sup> claims that Frederick the Great need but betray his presence by a slight noise in order to frighten the whole imperial army into flight. In the song entitled *Poetische Gedanken*<sup>31</sup> the imperial soldiers warn Frederick that his "ca-ca- career is nearing its end" and are told by him in a humorous vein to hie homeward and sleep themselves sober. A *Kriegslied der Preussen im siebenjährigen Kriege* (1758)<sup>32</sup> expresses similar sentiments. *Das grosse Hahngeschrei*, finally,<sup>33</sup> ridicules the ostensibly henpecked husband of Maria Theresia, Francis I.

#### *Periodicals.*

An examination of the various periodicals of the time, as for instance the divers *Musenalmanache*, the *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen*, the *Beyträge zum Vergnügen des Verstandes und Witzes*, discloses some empty praise of the Emperor and of the Empire, but no political satire worthy of the name. The magazines in question were, of course, devoted primarily to *belles lettres* and were subject to distinct English and French influences. The last mentioned periodical is perhaps a fair example. In its four volumes, published between the years 1744-1748, it contains only the following material of even remote interest to us, an ode *Der Wütrich*,<sup>34</sup> a poem *An Seine Hochwürden, den Herrn Abt Mosheim*<sup>35</sup> complaining against lack of patriotism among Germans, and some verses entitled *Kaysers Sigismund*,<sup>36</sup> praising the latter for his leniency and mod-

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70 ff.

<sup>32</sup> Erk-Böhme, *Deutscher Liederhort*, II., p. 142.

<sup>33</sup> Ditfurth, *Die historischen Volkslieder des siebenjährigen Krieges*, p. 78 ff.

<sup>34</sup> 1. Band, 4. Stück.

<sup>35</sup> 2. Band, 1. Stück.

<sup>36</sup> 4. Buch, 1. Stück.

eration in dealing with his enemies. Two frequently mentioned and very able publications of the Göttingen Professor August Ludwig Schlözer, the *Briefwechsel meist statistischen Inhalts*, one volume (1775), and the *Briefwechsel meist historischen und politischen Inhalts*, ten volumes (1776–1782), afford a good insight into contemporary publicistic conditions. Chronologically these works belong to a later period, nevertheless for the sake of convenience they will be considered here. They present sources in the field of history, general statistics and current events and are in the form of correspondence edited by Schlözer. The great care and fearful conservatism which the editor felt compelled to exercise in the course of his work are very manifest. In fact, he himself admits that he has taken every precaution not to offend those in authority.<sup>37</sup> Hence his attitude toward Joseph II. is almost adulatory.<sup>38</sup> The nearest approach to satire is probably found in a documentary report on an erstwhile settlement of Count v. Hanau in South America in 1669.<sup>39</sup> We read (p. 254): *Auch arme appanagierte deutsche Fürsten und Grafen sollen Land in Indien nemen; in kurzem könnten sie da grösser, wie die Principalen ihres Hauses selbst hier aussen, werden.*

Other material that appeared in periodicals, either originally or in reprint, will be considered under individual authors.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Vorrede* to *Briefwechsel meist statistischen Inhalts*, written February, 1775; also *Vorbericht* to Vol. 5 of *Briefwechsel meist historischen und politischen Inhalts*, written November, 1779.

<sup>38</sup> *Briefwechsel meist historischen und politischen Inhalts*, 9. Theil (1781), Heft L., Nr. 12, p. 106 ff. *Ibid.*, Heft LII., Brief IV., d. 23. Juni 1781.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. Theil, Heft X., Nr. 40, p. 237 ff.

## CHAPTER VI

### GOETHE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

The so-called classical period of German literature, the age of the immortal triad, Goethe, Schiller and Lessing, is of the greatest importance for our subject. For at that time more than ever the Holy Roman Empire was discussed by men of letters in an increasingly satirical vein. And deservedly so, since the structure had by now indeed become a huge laughing stock of the literary world. Its absolute uselessness, its incohesiveness, its torpidity and its cumbersome, antiquated customs presented a rich field not only to the wags of the day but also to serious-minded men. Latter-day students of the period have frequently called attention to this fact and have pointed out isolated cases of satirical comment on the Empire. A connected study of the subject, however, has never been undertaken.

*J. J. and K. F. v. Moser.*

Attention was called in the previous chapter to the conspicuous absence of patriotism thruout the period. The majority of writers were consequently quite apathetic in regard to political developments at home. A feeling of supreme disgust took hold of them and they turned to other more pleasing, albeit oftentimes recondite paths. Yet there were exceptions. Notable among the latter are the two splendid figures Johann Jakob von Moser and his son Karl Friedrich, and a writer with whom the former are sometimes confused, Justus Möser. Genuine patriots all three of them, they displayed untiring energy for the cause of more efficient government. In fact, the Moser pair even became martyrs to this cause, for they suffered unwarrantable persecution at the hands of their tyran-

nical rulers,<sup>1</sup> who recognized in them highly dangerous critics. In his work *Vom deutschen Nationalgeist* (1766), for instance, Karl Friedrich showed that altho Germany was logically at the head of all nations by virtue of its investiture with the imperial honors, it had become an object of contempt, a house divided against itself, the booty of all. He is especially bitter toward the princes who reserve the right to obey the Emperor at their own discretion and magnanimously tolerate the Aulic Council, provided it caters to their own desires. Furthermore he attacks the powerful estates who bully their weaker neighbors. With clear insight he discloses in the *Patriotische Briefe* the chief lack of the country, a patriotically inclined mediating and stabilizing force, which could act both as a check and a protector in the relations of the Emperor with the estates.

### Möser.

Justus Möser is the author of the interesting *Patriotische Phantasien*, a work praised highly by Goethe in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Möser, too, laments the absence of a mediatorial element between the Emperor and the princes and sees the only possibility of salvation in the municipalities. But since the latter were in a state of disruption, this hope was forlorn. He studies the decline of the trades in small cities<sup>2</sup> and complains of the absolute degeneration in Germany of the spirit of trade and commerce with foreign countries,<sup>3</sup> a field in which, he says, Germany has missed golden opportunities.<sup>4</sup> In an essay which gives advice on the establishment of a proposed grain trading company on the Weser river<sup>5</sup> Möser is quite satirical in regard to the lack of German nationalism. He shows the impossibility of fostering patriotism without centralized national interests, the impracticability of a national theatre without a national

<sup>1</sup> Biedermann, *Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert*, I., pp. 38-39. Cf. also J. J. Moser, *Lebensgeschichte*, 1777; H. vom Busche, *K. Fr. v. Moser*, 1846; and *Die beiden Moser* in Vol. I. of *Germania*, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> *Patriotische Phantasien*, ed. Voigts, 1. Theil, Nr. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 339.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 52.

capital,<sup>6</sup> and in a footnote significantly points out that Germans even lack characteristic national curses, watchwords and allusions. He studies, too, the interest, or rather lack of it, which various rulers in history displayed toward the towns.<sup>7</sup> Finally he wrote a paper making suggestions as to a more efficient maintenance of the Imperial Court of Justice.<sup>8</sup> Originally the essay was satirically called: *A very important suggestion which will not be carried out*, which was later modified. It is satirical in tone against *das heilige römische Reichskammergericht, von dessen Notwendigkeit jeder rechtschaffene Mann überzeugt ist* and urges the introduction of a protective tariff. As a youth Möser also wrote a drama *Arminius*, which, in accord with the author's practical turn of mind, contains repeated references to contemporary conditions.<sup>9</sup>

### *Klopstock.*

The attitude that Klopstock took regarding politics is peculiarly anomalous. In a broad sense he was thoroughly patriotic, but despised Frederick the Great and hence disregarded him and the Prussian state entirely. Feeling the need, however, of giving vent to his love of fatherland in some tangible way, he composed carefully elaborated odes in glowing praise of Germany of his day as a direct development of the Frankish and Gothic realms of the first century after Christ.<sup>10</sup> The contemporary German princes he calls descendants of Hermann and their armies Cheruskian.<sup>11</sup> The ode *An den Kaiser* (1781)<sup>12</sup> is a sincere encomium of Emperor Joseph II. After mentioning several instances in which Germany suffered humiliation at the hands of Rome, notably the Canossa incident of Henry IV., Klopstock points to Joseph as a new savior. *Heinrich der Vogler*<sup>13</sup> expresses similar but broader sentiments of

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 385.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 53.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. Theil, Nr. 74.

<sup>9</sup> Vid. Weissenfels, *Goethe im Sturm und Drang*, p. 250.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., e. g., *Unsere Sprache*, 1767.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the ode *Wir und Sie*, 1766.

<sup>12</sup> Muncker-Pawel, II., pp. 29-30.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, I., p. 78.

Klopstockian patriotism. At first blush such views sound almost ridiculous to the unbiased reader, familiar with conditions at the time; in fact, they could well-nigh be regarded as satirical, were they not so sincere. The truth of the matter is that Klopstock, like many of his contemporaries, was too much of an idealist to comprehend or even to study actual political conditions. Serenely and calmly he lived alone in his own world of poetic fancy.

### *Lessing.*

Lessing, too, was politically a quietist. As early as in the articles contributed to the *Berlinische Privilegierte Zeitung*<sup>14</sup> he disclaims as a scholar all interest in politics. His characterization of patriotism as an heroic weakness, with which he gladly dispensed, is well known.<sup>15</sup> On the whole he remained true to this principle thruout his life. Occasionally, to be sure, he mentions the subject in letters and in the posthumous fragments, and in *Ernst und Falk* he even engages in more profound, albeit theoretical speculation on the state, its origins and its *raison d'être*. We may then call him a cosmopolitan<sup>16</sup> in the broadest and best sense of the word, a theorist far ahead of his times. He exemplifies what may be termed the higher patriotism, an ideal toward which the world at large is still vainly struggling. Which element contributed more to this attitude, Lessing's stern, unemotional nature, or the wretched condition of his country, must remain an open question.<sup>17</sup>

### *Wieland.*

It seems to be no coincidence that the scenes of some of Wieland's novels are laid in the Graeco-Roman world at the

<sup>14</sup> Lachmann-Muncker, Vols. 4, 5 and 7 passim.

<sup>15</sup> In a letter to Gleim of February 14, 1759. Lachmann-Muncker, 17, 158.

<sup>16</sup> That he was sincere in his cosmopolitanism is proved by a review in the *Berlinische Privilegierte Zeitung* of 1751 in which he criticises a misanthropic, carping malcontent, who claims to be a cosmopolitan. Lachmann-Muncker, 4, 307.

<sup>17</sup> Heinrich v. Treitschke, *Histor. u. Polit. Aufsätze*, 6. Aufl., 1. Band, S. 68-74, treats this phase of Lessing's activity very sympathetically.

time of its decadence, when men were compelled to seek refuge in Stoic renunciation or Platonic idealism. For, as Biedermann points out,<sup>18</sup> the Germany that Wieland knew was in the same plight. There can hardly be doubt, then, that he was deliberately pointing to his own country when he wrote. Politically he was made of the same stuff as Lessing, altho he was more outspoken in his views. Any reader who is versed at all in the conditions of the time and who is familiar with Bernhard Seuffert's pamphlet,<sup>19</sup> must see in the *Abderiten* at least some reference to contemporary Germany. Just as *Agathon* discloses the author's own spiritual development and *Don Sylvio* reveals a sojourn in "a small republic,"<sup>20</sup> while chapter eight of the second part of *Der goldene Spiegel* refers to Joseph II.,<sup>21</sup> *Die Abderiten* gives us a picture, in part at least, of conditions in Germany. Seuffert points out some very concrete instances of this,<sup>22</sup> refuting the claims of Wieland himself, who attempted to deny such references.<sup>23</sup>

Broadly speaking, Abdera is a composite photograph of many of the smaller German cities of the eighteenth century, as for instance Mannheim. That the picture is accurate is proved by the numerous complaints that were heard soon after the publication of the first two parts.<sup>24</sup> Much of the work, however, is a general scathing satire on conditions prevailing thruout the Empire. The people of Abdera, for example, appoint a commission to manage the finances of the national theatre;<sup>25</sup> the delegates, however, prove incompetent, allow errors to enter into their calculations, and involve the city in serious debts. This state of affairs continues for several years, until the root of the trouble is finally discovered! The famous

<sup>18</sup> *Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert*, II., 2, p. 219. Goethe, too, makes the same point in his eulogistic speech on Wieland (1813), Weimar ed., Vol. 36, p. 331.

<sup>19</sup> *Wielands Abderiten. Vortrag v. Bernhard Seuffert*. Berlin, 1878.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. fourth note to Book III. of *Don Sylvio*.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Auswahl denkwürdiger Briefe v. C. M. Wieland*, II., 3, 5, 46, 48.

<sup>22</sup> Seuffert, pp. 9, 10, 11, 21-26.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Wieland's letter to Schwan in *Weim. Jahrbuch*, V., 18 ff.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Pröhle in *D. N. L.*, 568, p. xvi.

<sup>25</sup> Book 3, Chapter 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

case involving the donkey's shadow, which Wieland describes at length in Book 4, also savors strongly of satire. The wheels of justice turned just as slowly at Abdera, it seems, as they did at Wetzlar, for Wieland compares their movement with the course of a snail,<sup>26</sup> and says that cases usually dragged on as long as the financial resources or the patience of the litigants permitted. The hairsplitting, pedantic decision, too, rendered by Militias,<sup>27</sup> is a takeoff on juridical proceedings of the time, as is also the appeal to higher authority and the partisanship of the whole population. The search for precedents, finally, described in Book 4, Chapter 8, reveals none other than the rusty imperial machinery of justice, which never decided a case, but only added to its hopeless intricacy. Wieland closes the novel with the hope that it will be read only as long as it calls forth a response thruout the country,<sup>28</sup> that is, as long as the shoe fits.

Interesting from a political point of view are Wieland's *Ge-spräche unter vier Augen*, especially No. 3, entitled *Was ist zu thun?*,<sup>29</sup> a dialogue between Wilibald, the German, and Heribert, the French partisan, on conditions in Germany at the time (1798). The former feels the humiliation of his country keenly and expresses chagrin at the thought that the once glorious and majestic Empire, the erstwhile pride of the whole world, should suddenly be relegated to the condition of pedestal, as it were, to serve the newly arisen Gallic colossus (p. 20). Heribert answers that strictly speaking, Germany is not a nation at all but an aggregate of some 200 states of every conceivable size. And no one should expect, he adds, that such a structure will subsist forever, especially after its constitution has become untenable and the principles of its feudal system antiquated (p. 21). Even the heroes of the sixteenth century, as Franz v. Sickingen and Ulrich v. Hutten would be helpless at the present time, he argues, comparing the Empire with an old, dilapidated Gothic structure, still surviving but consid-

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>27</sup> Book 4, Chapter 4.

<sup>28</sup> Book 5, Chapter 10, p. 320.

<sup>29</sup> Appeared first in *Neuer Teutscher Merkur*, April, 1798. D. N. L., 56<sup>e</sup>, pp. 19-35.



erably weakened by an earthquake. Germany's chief problem, according to him, is the question of self-preservation.

*Herder.*

If ever there existed a man of dynamic nature endowed with deep, elemental passions, it was Herder. Naturally, then, he felt more keenly than the average mould of men the disgrace and humiliation of his country. Gleim saw in him the ideal of the real, true German,<sup>30</sup> and Böttiger called him the noble champion of the silently suffering nation, a second Hutten, as it were.<sup>31</sup> Further, when the Frenchman Cacaute traveled in Germany in 1773 for the purpose of studying native character, the Hanoverian physician Zimmermann sent him to Herder in Bückeberg.<sup>32</sup> And finally when in 1787 Margrave Karl Friedrich of Baden founded an institute for fostering public spirit in Germany, Herder was asked to develop the plans.<sup>33</sup>

In the third chapter of the eighteenth book of his *Ideen* Herder speaks of the Franks and of Charles the Great. He considers the empire of the latter the first solid foundation for a European monarchy.<sup>34</sup> He praises Charlemagne highly, but expresses the wish that his crown might have perished with him, at least as far as Germany is concerned (p. 748), for it was an oppressive burden on the heads of his successors. Herder then continues in his majestic language to portray the unfortunate quarrels and the gradual decay of the Empire which ensued after the death of Charles the Great, its soul. He calls it a corpse, which has for centuries lain in a state of decomposition, and he hopes that in 1800 a new Charlemagne will arise who will modify the old machine. In the fifth chapter of the same book (p. 761) he expresses the assurance that the seductive splendor of the Empire did Germany more harm than good and mentions the "general chaos" of the German

<sup>30</sup> *Ion und an Herder*, I., 159.

<sup>31</sup> Suphan, *Werke*, Vol. 18, p. 554.

<sup>32</sup> Jonetz, *Ueber Herders nationale Gesinnung*.

<sup>33</sup> v. Weech in *Preuss. Jahrbuch*, XXI., p. 695.

<sup>34</sup> Volume 43, p. 746 of *Herders Werke* in D. N. L.

constitution,<sup>35</sup> which was magnified by the entangling alliance with the Pope.<sup>36</sup> He demonstrates, too, that a conglomerate nation, which lacks cohesion, and a spirit of mutual cooperation, i. e., national character, is a monstrosity.<sup>37</sup> In *Ueber die neuere deutsche Literatur*<sup>38</sup> he compares Germany with the tower of Babel because of its particularistic, partisan spirit. He speaks much in the same tone as Möser. On another occasion he quotes from a letter of Frederick the Great to Voltaire of 1759,<sup>39</sup> in which Frederick jokingly says that for the coming year he will have opportunity to subdue only the Queen of Hungary, the Mandarins of the Holy Empire, and the robbers of Lapland. Moreover in a eulogy on Joseph II., written soon after the death of the Emperor, Herder asserts that the great ruler became an unfortunate victim of the foul atmosphere prevailing in his own realm.<sup>40</sup>

Herder also wrote several poems on the subject. *An den Genius von Deutschland* (1770)<sup>41</sup> is an utterance of bitter grief over the mortification and enervation of Germany and contains the metaphor, which we found as early as Sachs, of the distressed mother whose children have been crushed at her bosom. *Deutschlands Ehre* (1793),<sup>42</sup> a poem of the same tenor, lauds Henry the Fowler as a model German ruler, but bemoans the fact that Italian rivers are tinged with German blood and that German rulers pillage and plunder one another. Another poetic composition entitled *An den Kaiser* (1780)<sup>43</sup> addresses Joseph II.:

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 762; also p. 767.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 767, 776.

<sup>37</sup> *Ideen*, IX., 4. Suphan, XIII., pp. 384-385.

<sup>38</sup> I., p. 141 in Suphan ed. Cf. also *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität*, Vol. 5, p. 25 of *Werke* in D. N. L.

<sup>39</sup> *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität*, D. N. L., Vol. 5, p. 42—from *Oeuvres posthumes de Frédéric le Grand Roi de Prusse*, 4 vols., Berlin, 1788, Vol. 2, p. 323.

<sup>40</sup> D. N. L., Herder, Vol. 5, p. 47.

<sup>41</sup> Suphan, *Werke*, XXIX., p. 329 ff.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 580 ff.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 551. In the Index it is dated 1778.

*O Kaiser, Du von neun und neunzig Fürsten  
und Ständen, wie des Meeres Sand,  
das Oberhaupt, gib uns, wornach wir dürsten,  
ein Deutsches Vaterland . . . ,*

while the poem *Germanien* is a call to Germany to awaken.<sup>44</sup> A satirical hexametric composition entitled *Luthers Fabel vom Löwen und Esel* (1792)<sup>45</sup> is worth considering at greater length. The lion, the king of the whole animal world, lying on his deathbed, calls his subjects to a final diet and has crown prince Leo elected as his successor. The old ruler dies and immediately sedition, prompted by the false advisers to whom the king had lent ear, runs rampant. The estates are divided as to the best course to pursue, until the crafty fox, in the typical verbiage of contemporary imperial officialdom suggests the donkey as ruler and full of awe points to the holy cross discernible on the back of the latter. The assemblage waxes enthusiastic over this stimulating suggestion:

*“Wir haben gefunden  
Unsern König, vom Himmel uns selbst zum König erkoren,  
Weltliches Reich und geistliches Reich zu regieren geschaffen.  
Schaut die Ohren! Zum Beicht- und Klaganhören erhöht!  
Hört die Stimme! (Erhebe die Stimm’, Ehrwürdiger Esel!)  
Wer kann singen wie Er? wer redet ans Herz so gewaltig?  
Wer ruft muthiger aus? wer kann allmächtiger gebieten?  
Nichts ist an unserm Bruder, das nicht die herrlichsten Ehren,  
Papstes und Königs Ehren, verdient. Und sehet das Kreuz da!”—  
Alle sahen das Kreuz, und fielen nieder, und riefen:  
“Heil dem Könige, Heil! dem Gottgegebenen Esel!  
Ihm dem Mehrer des Reichs!” So war er zum Fürsten erwählt.*

The exiled lion retires in sorrow to the wilderness, accompanied by his faithful councillors. At a meeting the dog speaks and questions the donkey’s right to the throne as well as the venerableness of the cross. It is voted to arrange a single combat between the two claimants. The lion wins the first test

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210 ff.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 574 ff. In the Index it is called *Der Wettstreit um die Krone. Eine Fabel*.

by leaping over a brook, while his rival, the donkey, slips in the mire. The donkey, however, wins the second test by catching a raven thru mere chance, and also the third by deceit. Convinced at last that the cross must after all impart supernatural power, the lion yields, but is rightfully reinstated when the dog informs the donkey's owner of the affair. The poem *Coalition*,<sup>46</sup> finally, which dates from the period after 1790, is a protest against the war agitation of the time and the end of the so-called First Coalition. It voices the usual belief of the time that a poet had better shun politics altogether<sup>47</sup> and assigns a much higher, more important place to humanity (*die Menschlichkeit*).<sup>48</sup>

### *Bürger.*

Bürger, too, forswears politics,<sup>49</sup> and in a dramatic poem, *Der Bauer* (1775),<sup>50</sup> gives vent to his wrath against the ruthless, selfish princes, who ride roughshod over the rights of others. "Do you claim power from God?" he lets the peasant exclaim to his lord. "God brings blessings, while you rob. You are not connected with the Deity, tyrant!" In fact, thru-out his works Bürger reveals strong democratic leanings. In their correspondence he as well as Göckingk show their hate for the arbitrary rule and the political mismanagement of the princes. Furthermore, Bürger was an enthusiastic friend of the French Revolution. His free-mason speech, delivered in 1790,<sup>51</sup> gives a concise summary of his political ideals.

<sup>46</sup> *Herders Gedichte*, ed. J. G. Müller, 1817, Vol. I., p. 267. Cf. also Suphan, XVIII, 348 and 355-356 and G. Hauff in *Archiv f. d. Studium der neueren Sprachen*. Vol. 66, p. 308.

<sup>47</sup> The Goethean sentiment *Ein politisch Lied! Ein leidig Lied!* is here expressed in the words *Politisch Lied ein böses, böses Lied* as a proverb.

<sup>48</sup> The idea is identical with that expressed in the epigram of Goethe-Schiller:

*Zur Nation euch zu bilden, ihr hofft es, Deutsche, vergebens;  
Bildet dafür, ihr könnt's, freier zu Menschen euch aus.*

(Cf. Hauff, *loc. cit.*)

<sup>49</sup> In his verses *Entsagung der Politik* (1793) D. N. L., 78, p. 424.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted by Ad. Strodtmann in *Neue Monatshefte f. Dichtkunst und Kritik*, Vol. I., p. 225 ff.

*Schubart*

Another martyr to the cause of liberty, similar to the Moser pair, was Christoph Daniel Friedrich Schubart, an admirer of Klopstock and a model for Schiller, who on the whole follows out Klopstock's style in a popularized form. He criticizes the foreign influence, the lack of virile, independent patriotism in Germany,<sup>52</sup> claims that the country is in a state of political somnolence, which, he hopes, will prove to be only a noonday nap,<sup>53</sup> and predicts a thoroughgoing change in the political system of Europe, especially in Germany.<sup>54</sup> Altho a profound admirer of both Joseph II. and Leopold II. and still a serious believer in the legend of the Empire, he realizes fully the incompetency of the imperial diet and of the Imperial Court of Justice. He expresses the wish:<sup>55</sup> "May the spirit of God guide the worthy men, that their arguments take effect as if they were divine lightning, so that our Gothic, formal, labyrinthine, unphilosophical, often un-Christian system of legal procedure, which extends beyond the span of our own lives and lacks the spirit and the warmth of life, may at length be abolished. I wish, too, that my dear Fatherland might learn to act more and to write less." In a poem *Der Reichsadler*<sup>56</sup> he explains the fact that the German coat of arms contains a two-headed eagle by reference to Emperor Joseph II. and King Frederick of Prussia. Unfortunately, however, they are at odds, he says:

*Was eine Krallen packt, packt auch die andere Krallen;  
Dum zerren sie so jämmerlich  
O Vaterland, wie daurst du mich!*

*v. Thümmel.*

Moritz August v. Thümmel considers the Empire in a much lighter vein and holds up to ridicule only certain phases of it.

<sup>52</sup> In the *Vaterlandschronik*, Jahrgang 1787, *Gesammelte Schr.*, Vol. 8.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 121.

He satirizes, for example, the incompetency of the imperial army in the lines *Auf einen Rekruten zur Reichsarmee*,<sup>57</sup> a jocose epitaph on a recruit who might well have attained as much glory as his colonel, had the fool not died of fright! General conditions in the Empire, too, especially such as had prevailed formerly but still held good, were subjected to Thümmel's sarcasm. A *Colloquy*<sup>58</sup> written in a humorous vein, is a good instance of this tendency. One of the speakers, wishing to become a Teutonic knight, is questioned by a friend as to his eligibility on the score of old family traditions. He answers that his family can be classed among the oldest, most venerable in the Holy Roman Empire, and that one of his ancestors belonged to the band that murdered Emperor Albrecht. "That, I think, ought to establish my place in the ranks of the most honored aristocrats of the land!" he proudly adds.

#### *C. and F. L. Stolberg.*

Like Schubart, the Stolberg brothers, Christian and Friedrich Leopold, were staunch patriots possessed of strong national feeling. Both members of the Klopstockian circle at Göttingen, they were well versed in the patriotic commonplaces of their creed. Especially Friedrich Leopold was happy in expressing these sentiments. His ideals were Tell, Hermann, Klopstock, Brutus, Timoleon and Luther.<sup>59</sup> On many occasions he mourns over Germany's ignominy,<sup>60</sup> expresses hate against France,<sup>61</sup> and in *Die Insel*<sup>62</sup> he speaks of the labyrinths of contemporary jurisprudence as well as the would-be politicians who expound impracticable theories. At one time<sup>63</sup> he speaks of the jealousy and megalomania of the German states in their opposition to the Emperor and the Empire, and the

<sup>57</sup> *Göttinger Musenalmanach*, 1771. *Sämmtl. Werke*, Leipzig, 1839, Vol. 8, p. 31.

<sup>58</sup> *Sämmtl. Werke*, Vol. 8, p. 61.

<sup>59</sup> *Gesammelte Werke*, I., pp. 18-19.

<sup>60</sup> *Rundgesang*, *ibid.*, pp. 348-351. *An Carl, Freiherrn v. Hompesch*, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 81, etc.

<sup>61</sup> *Die Westhunen*, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 119 ff.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 231.

<sup>63</sup> September 18, 1800—Joh. Janssen: *Friedrich Graf v. Stolberg*, p. 333.

lack of character on the part of the people as prime causes for the degeneration of the country. However, when the Empire was finally dissolved, his hate for the French and his veneration of pristine conditions prompted him to write:<sup>64</sup> *Kaiser Franz ist also nicht mehr unser Kaiser, unser altes Reich ist aufgelöst. Ich weiss, wie gleichgültig viele Deutsche dabei bleiben und wie vieles sich sagen liess von der Veraltung unserer ehrwürdigen Verfassung. Man wird bald gewahr werden, welchen Schritt der zerstörende Geist der Zeit durch Auflösung des Reichs gewann!*

*Lichtenberg and Pfeffel.*

Georg Christoph Lichtenberg and Gottlieb Conrad Pfeffel, the former in his aphorisms, the latter in his fables, frequently reveal a satirical vein. Several times Lichtenberg directs his shafts against the juridical proceedings of the time in Germany. "I wonder what would happen," he slyly says,<sup>65</sup> "if the news suddenly came from heaven that the Lord had decided to send a commission of plenipotentiary angels down to earth to travel around in Europe, in order to settle important legal cases, for which there is no judge here below except the right of the stronger? How many a state official would in that case prefer to request most graciously a leave of absence, in order to attend a whale-fishing party or to breathe the pure Cape Horn air, rather than remain in office!" On another occasion he applies the Horatian *nonum prematur in annum* to German legal procedure,<sup>66</sup> adding that cases so long delayed are usually handled less efficiently than those decided with promptitude. Pfeffel resembles Lichtwer in his tendencies. Both are fable writers with strong satirical leanings. The attitude of the former is well exemplified in the poem *Die Reichsgeschichte der Tiere*,<sup>67</sup> which relates how the animal ruler gradually degenerated from the position of champion of the weak, the op-

<sup>64</sup> August 22, 1806. *Op. cit.*, p. 358.

<sup>65</sup> *Politische Bemerkungen*, D. N. L., 141, p. 142.

<sup>66</sup> *Vermischte Schriften*, Bd. II., S. 44.

<sup>67</sup> D. N. L., 73, p. 79.

pressed, to a plundering tyrant. In a general way this composition sketches the imperial degeneration in Germany.

*Schiller.*

Schiller was no enemy of the Empire. As a poet gifted with a romantic breadth of vision, he gloried in the erstwhile splendor of his country. The first stanza of *Der Graf von Hapsburg*, in which the coronation feast of Rudolf I. is described, furnishes a typical instance of this. A composition which unfortunately remained in fragmentary form, a mere sketch, the so-called *Centenary Poem*<sup>68</sup> reveals the same sentiments. It owes its inception to a suggestion which Göschen made early in 1801, but it was never completed, because Schiller realized the impossibility and impropriety of a paean on the Holy Roman Empire at that time. Some completed fragments of it, however, are noteworthy, as for example the lines:

*Stürzte auch in Kriesesflammen  
Deutschlands Kaiserreich zusammen,  
Deutsche Grösse bleibt bestehn.*<sup>69</sup>

and the verses:

*Finster zwar und grau vor Jahren,  
Aus den Zeiten der Barbaren  
Stammt der Deutschen altes Reich.  
Doch lebendge Blumen grünen  
Ueber gotischen Ruinen.*<sup>70</sup>

In *Wilhelm Tell* Schiller makes a careful distinction between the Empire and the Archduchy of Austria. The fact that the Swiss hold their land directly and solely from the Emperor, the highest lord in Christendom (Act 1, Sc. 2), is emphasized. Similarly the masons in Act 1, Sc. 3 express willingness to salute the imperial crown, but have no love or respect for the

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Sauer, *Die deutschen Säkulardichtungen*, in *Deutsche Literaturdenkmale des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, Vol. 91, pp. cxliii and 189 ff.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.



"Austrian hat." Rudenz in Act 2, Sc. 1, ridicules the thought that the Empire will protect the Swiss cantons, because the former cannot even defend itself against the growing might of Austria, and the Emperor's<sup>71</sup> word is no more reliable in this case than when given to the imperial cities. Stauffacher (II., 2) calls attention to the fact that the Swiss chose voluntarily the protection afforded them by the Empire and emphasizes their independent affiliation. The delegates at the Rütli decide that it is useless to await justice from the Emperor, since he has no time for them, and they propose to seek it themselves. The questions of Walther Tell (III., 3) and the answers of his father, finally, tend to show that the Germans were not happy under the imperial government.

In such an essay as the *History of the Thirty Years' War* the author can, of course, hardly introduce effective satire. However, he well recognizes in the work the weaknesses and shortcomings of the seventeenth century Empire. The title of Emperor he calls a relic of despotic Rome, a conception of absolute sovereignty, which was in ridiculous contrast to the rest of German public law, but was fatuously defended by the jurists and the friends of despotism.<sup>72</sup> The greatness of the Emperor in Wallenstein's day, says Schiller,<sup>73</sup> was due to Wallenstein himself, so that after the latter had fallen, the ruler again sank back into his nothingness. Furthermore Schiller rightly claims<sup>74</sup> that the Empire itself was by virtue of its disunity its own worst internal enemy, a disorganized and moribund structure.

The well known tirade of the Capucinian monk in the latter part of *Wallensteins Lager* contains the following lines:

*Und das römische Reich—dass Gott erbarm!  
Sollte jetzt heissen römisch Arm.*

<sup>71</sup> Schiller considers Rudolf I. as virtual Emperor, altho the latter never received the title. Thruout the play repeated reference is, of course, made to his reign.

<sup>72</sup> Bellermann, *Schillers Werke*, VII., pp. 47-48, 1. Teil, 1. Buch.

<sup>73</sup> 1. Teil, 2. Buch, *ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>74</sup> Introduction to Third Book, *ibid.*, p. 212.

As was pointed out by Boxberger in the *Archiv für Literaturgeschichte*<sup>75</sup> as early as 1872, and as the correspondence of Schiller and Goethe in October, 1798, shows,<sup>76</sup> the source for this invective is a book of the seventeenth century preacher Abraham a Santa Clara entitled *Reimb dich oder ich Liss dich, etc.*, to which Goethe first called Schiller's attention. Especially the section *Auff Auff Ihr Christen* served Schiller as a model for his denunciatory address. There we read for example:<sup>77</sup> *Von vielen Jahren her ist das Römische Reich schier Römisch Arm worden durch stätte Krieg . . . ; Elsass ist ein Elendsass worden durch lauter Krieg; der Rhein-Strohm ist ein Peyn-Strohm worden durch lautter Krieg und andere Länder in Elender kehrt worden durch lauter Krieg.* This excellent quip at the expense of the Empire, then, was not original with Schiller but is fully one hundred years older. Even its author, however, who has often been depicted as a merciless scoffer by those who know him but slightly, elsewhere shows respect for the Empire.<sup>78</sup>

Other references to the Empire in *Wallenstein* can be referred to only briefly. In the *Lager*<sup>79</sup> the Second Chasseur claims that Emperor Ferdinand secured his army only by virtue of its fidelity to Wallenstein. An argument ensues. The majority of the soldiers, among them the Trumpeter and the Chasseur, call Wallenstein their supreme lord, while the First Arquebusier confesses allegiance to the Emperor. When he claims that the Emperor pays the troops, he is, however, sarcastically answered by the Trumpeter (ll. 880 ff.) :

*Das leugn' ich Ihm, sieht Er, ins Angesicht,  
Wer uns nicht zahlt, das ist der Kaiser!*

Illo makes a similar statement in *Die Piccolomini*, Act I, Sc. I (ll. 58 ff.) :

<sup>75</sup> Vol. II., pp. 159-178.

<sup>76</sup> Jonas *Briefe*, Vol. 5., p. 447 et passim.

<sup>77</sup> In the Salzburg, 1687, ed., p. 16.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25, he calls Emperor Charles V. an Austrian Hercules and recounts his deeds of prowess. *Ibid.*, p. 27, he speaks of "most worthy Germany."

<sup>79</sup> II. Auftritt, ll. 710 ff.

*Der Kaiser gibt uns nichts—vom Herzog  
Kommt alles, was wir hoffen, was wir haben.*

and Buttler says in the same play, Act 1, Sc. 2 (ll. 255 ff.):

*Vom Wallenstein  
Erhielten wir den Kaiser erst zum Herrn,  
Er knüpft uns, er allein, an diese Fahnen.*

In the *Tod*, Wallenstein calls the imperial dignity "the highest thing in the world" (Act 2, Sc. 2, l. 837); Buttler bitterly ridicules Octavio's suggestion that the Austrian emperors ever show gratitude to those in their service (Act 2, Sc. 6, l. 1099); Deveroux, finally, expresses a similar thought (Act 5, Sc. 2, l. 3250).<sup>80</sup>

#### *Goethe.*

The fact that Goethe spent the greater part of his childhood in and around Frankfurt, the city which had come to be regarded as a center of imperial activities, the city in which the later emperors, Roman only in name, went thru the antiquated formalities of coronation, had a great influence on the poet from his earliest youth until the very time of his death. He was afforded many an opportunity to admire the poetic lustre and the romantic splendor that imperial traditions cast about them. But his education in this respect did not remain one-sided, for he comprehended even at an immature age the rottenness and incohesiveness of the Empire. He saw the treasured Golden Bull in his native city, but soon learned to understand its antiquated nature. In the Seven Years' War he was an admirer and partisan of Frederick the Great, and as a student in Strassburg he could say nothing good of the imperial constitution,<sup>81</sup> but on the contrary attributed the insults that the Empire had suffered, as for example the occupation of Alsace by the French, to the weakness of the government. Much has been said and written in regard to Goethe's apathy

<sup>80</sup> Illo is alleged once to have used in actual life words similar to those put into Deveroux' mouth.

<sup>81</sup> *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 3. Theil, 11. Buch, Weimar ed., 28, p. 56.

on the subject of contemporary politics. The poet has been criticized again and again for his alleged quietism and in some quarters has been called even unpatriotic and cold-blooded in regard to his native land. Altho many of the charges frequently brought forth against him are untrue and others again bear the earmarks of exaggeration, Goethe's attitude of disinterest cannot wholly be explained away. It may, however, be motivated much in the same manner as the similar attitude of Lessing and other writers of the time was accounted for.<sup>82</sup>

Satirical thrusts at the Empire are fairly numerous in his works. As early as in the *Urfaust*, in the scene in *Auerbachs Keller*, Frosch sings the well-known lines on the Holy Roman Empire, which is on the point of falling to pieces, and is interrupted by a strong protest on the part of Brander in regard to the tiresomeness of political songs and the futility of engaging in politics.<sup>83</sup> This incident was incorporated into the edition of the completed First Part. It expresses the feeling of the time in general and may be considered the *locus classicus* of satire upon the Empire. Besides, it reveals the attitude of contempt which the people of Leipzig assumed toward those "from the Empire."<sup>84</sup> By virtue of the great amount of satire against the Holy Roman Empire, spread by literature and tradition at the time,<sup>85</sup> a peculiar notion had gained way, especially in those parts of Germany that no longer owed immediate suzerainty to the Emperor, to the effect that the subjects of the

<sup>82</sup> His sentiment *ein politisch Lied! ein leiding Lied!* is proverbial. Wieland also quotes it in a letter to Sophie de La Roche, *Auswahl Denkwürdiger Briefe*, I., p. 157. Goethe himself repeats it to Johanna Fahlmer, Feb. 19, 1776. Cf. also for a similar thought *Tag- u. Jahreshefte zum Jahr 1804—Jubiläumsausgabe*, 30, p. 400. Cf. finally Kurt Jahn: *Goethes Stellung zur Geschichte und Literaturgeschichte*.

<sup>83</sup> *Auerbachs Keller* in U. F., II, 8 ff. Goethe's mother referred to this song again in a letter of Oct. 10, 1805 (*Schriften d. Goethe Gesellschaft*, 4, p. 287), saying that at the time of writing it was more applicable than ever.

<sup>84</sup> Cf., *ibid.*, I, 80.

<sup>85</sup> So common had this form of satire become and so general was its appeal that J. D. Falk in a humorous poem *Vom Mond und von seiner Mutter* even compares the crescent of a waning moon to an emaciated tailor who has been a journeyman in the Holy Roman Empire. *Grotesken und Naivitäten auf d. Jahr 1806*, p. 106.

Empire, in the restricted sense, displayed crass stupidity. Goethe himself had already referred to it in a letter to his sister Cornelia of October 12-14, 1767,<sup>86</sup> and in another to Friederike Oeser of November 6, 1768.<sup>87</sup>

In conjunction with the song of Frosch and the retort of Brander a farce of Hans Sachs entitled *Historia: Die geschicht keyser Maximiliani löblicher gedechtnuss mit dem alchamisten*, 1568,<sup>88</sup> seems to be of interest. The farce in question relates how an alchemist once visited Maximilian's court at Wels and after an interview with the Emperor was given a room in which to practise his hocus-pocus. One day he suddenly disappeared, and in his workshop was found a lump of gold inscribed with the words:

*O keyser Maximilian  
Wellicher dise kunste kan,  
Sicht dich nochs römisch reich nit an,  
Dass er dir solt zu gnaden gahn.*

When one considers the fact that in another connection Schröer

<sup>86</sup> Goethe Jb., VII., p. 69: *draussen bei Euch (i. e., im Reich) residirt die Dummheit ganz feste noch.*

<sup>87</sup> Hirzel, D. j. G. Other examples are plentiful in the literature of the time. Cf. the satirical poem of Falk: *Die Schmausereien* (in *Göttinger Musenalmanach* auf 1797, published again 1799):

*O wiss', im heil'gen Röm'schen Reiche  
Von Wien bis Potsdam braucht man minder Kopf als Bäume.*

Cf. also the poem of J. F. Ratschky, *Melchior Striegel*, ed. 1799. A tutor is chosen for young Melchior (p. 37):

*denn Wunderhold  
(So hiess der Mann) hatt' im ultima Thule  
Des Römischen Reichs auf einer Schule  
Der Pädagogik das neue System  
Kunstmässig erlernt, wie man ganz bequem  
Aus Ignoranten in wenigen Monden  
Alwisser macht, die Paris und London  
Mit ihren berühmten Akademien  
Hervorsubringen umsonst sich bemühn.*

Bodmer in his satirical poem *Die Larve* (1758), quoted by Ebeling I., p. 198 ff. furnishes another example:

*Die Kreise des heiligen römischen Reichs  
Deutscher Zunge, sie alle, und mit einhelliger Dummheit  
Hatten mich für Horatz genommen. . . .*

<sup>88</sup> Keller-Goetze, 16, pp. 422-426.

proved that Goethe was familiar with this poem,<sup>89</sup> and when one remembers that the poet's attention was called to Sachs very early in life, it seems at least possible that the work of the mastersinger-cobbler may have been one of the factors that influenced Goethe to write his satirical lines. Of still greater importance for Goethe's song are the verses of Jörg Busch (1551), quoted in Chapter III., that appear in Chapter VIII. of Fischart's *Geschichtklitterung*. Especially noteworthy is the fact that in Fischart as in Goethe the song is introduced in the course of a drinking bout.

Otto Marbach<sup>90</sup> is practically the only critic to note a relation between the "political song" of *Auerbachs Keller* and the political satire of Part II. of *Faust*. Nevertheless it is patent that in the two cases Goethe was dealing with the same subject, and there is every reason to believe that he was conscious of the fact. The condition of the Empire had always aroused his keen interest, especially after his stay at Wetzlar, and so he incorporated into *Auerbachs Keller*, one of the earliest scenes of *Faust*, some evidences of this interest, intending at the same time, no doubt, to elaborate the theme later in the *Zweiter Teil*, which, we know, formed part of his plan almost from the very beginning. Satirical treatment of the Empire, then, is one of the several interests which Goethe carried over from Part I. to Part II.

Up to very recent times most critics of *Faust* were content to consider the many obscure political allusions of the first and fourth acts of Part II. as referring in the main to the erstwhile Holy Roman Empire and to detect only here and there a reference to later events. However, beginning with Baumgart and much more so with the American critic Henry Wood, in his *Fauststudien*, the tendency to read into *Faust II.* more of the contemporary has come into vogue.<sup>91</sup> It is on the whole a very sensible departure from the older custom, for one can hardly imagine Goethe in the third decade of the nineteenth

<sup>89</sup> Schröder, *Faust*, II., pp. xix and xx.

<sup>90</sup> *Goethes Faust*, Stuttgart, 1881.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. also J. Goebel in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, Apr., 1917, p. 195 ff.

century composing to the exclusion of everything else satire against an evil that had ceased to exist two decades before.<sup>92</sup> Wood is quite correct in calling the Empire of Part II. half medieval and half modern,<sup>93</sup> medieval in makeup and outward appearance, but modern in its hidden tendencies and idiosyncracies. He points out many instances of contemporary satire, some of them unmistakable, others doubtful, and still others rather far-fetched. Since they refer entirely to a period subsequent to 1806, however, they cannot be considered in the present work. Only such references as point back to conditions before that date will be touched upon at all.

The Emperor depicted by Goethe might be considered a faithful copy of many a Germanic ruler of the middle ages. Goethe himself described him to Eckermann, October 1, 1827, as "a prince possessed of every possible capacity for losing his crown." Furthermore conditions described in Act 4 (ll. 10261, etc.) are reminiscent of imperial days and the portrayal of the enfeoffment of the various princes by the Emperor contains references to the Golden Bull. Such instances, however, make up only the frame of the picture, as it were. This frame, as we shall call it, is medieval in spirit; the picture itself deals with the Germany of Goethe's old age. Yet why should Goethe have adhered to the Romano-Germanic frame at all? At first blush such a procedure seems rather uncalled for. It may be explained partly by his ever-present interest in the old Empire, partly by another reason that has already been hinted at. After having included in *Auerbachs Keller* the satirical song, and after having portrayed the medieval Empire in *Götz*, he quite probably made up his mind to expand the subject in Part II. of his great drama. But when he finally set to work on the latter half of *Faust*, the Holy Roman Empire was a thing of the past and no longer offered a fitting theme for satire. However, rather than abandon the favorite subject entirely, the poet used it as a means for presenting more timely and more up-to-date problems, as a frame for a new picture.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

At one time to be sure, he had even thought specifically of Maximilian and his court at Augsburg, but had wisely dropped this attempt at definite localization. He finally contented himself with a portrayal of the general situation thruout the Empire, with its internal anarchy, its incohesiveness, its insistence on obsolete forms and customs, and its particularism, and constructed upon this foundation a picture of Germany in 1820-1830.<sup>24</sup>

If it were necessary to quote another case in which Goethe shows interest in the medieval history of Germany, his play *Götz von Berlichingen* could be cited. Here again the author depicts certain phases of the decadence of the Empire, with particular reference to the age of Maximilian, "the last of the knights," a time when the young Luther was preparing for his great life work, when the juridical machinery of the country was impeded and hampered by the introduction of the new Roman law, and when the lower classes were oppressed and harassed by their superiors. But Goethe's subjective mind could hardly grasp objectively the picture presented by the sources, Pistorius, Datt, Möser and Götz himself. Consequently he introduced many of his own impressions gained by observation of contemporary conditions, so that the Empire of *Götz* is a strange but undisturbing composite picture of Germany at two distinct stages of its development. The Bishop gives a drastic description of conditions (Act 1, *Bischöflicher Palast*) and calls the Empire a den for murderers. Weislingen's remark (Act 2, Adelheid-Weislingen scene): "The Emperor requests our help against the Turks, so it's only fair that he in turn should assist us" is significant and characteristic of the time. The incident of the peasant marriage in Act 2 is an excellent bit of satire at the expense of the dilatory courts and the pettifogging jurists. Maximilian himself reveals the essence of the trouble (Act 3, Sc. 1), when he speaks

<sup>24</sup> Cf. II, 4825 ff. For the factiousness in the Empire cf. II, 4845 ff. The procession of the elephant bearing Prudence and Victory and followed by Hope and Fear, enchained, reminds one in a general way of similar conceptions of Hans Sachs. In I, 10272 the Empire is compared with an inebriate.



to Weislingen of the egoism of the princes.<sup>95</sup> The First Officer in Act 3 (*Lager der Reichsexekution*) jocosely predicts that his men will be reluctant about risking their lives to capture Götz for the sake of the Empire and the Emperor. Yet it would be wrong to say that *Götz* reveals any disrespect for the Emperor. Both the speech of Weislingen, for example, (Act 1, *Du siehst die Fürsten an wie der Wolf*) and the answer of Götz show only affection and esteem for him, altho emphasizing his helplessness. Götz himself proves his respect for the Emperor on several occasions, in the answer to the Trumpeter (Act 3, *Jaxthausen*) and in the impressive scene (Act 3, *Saal*) in which, beleagured on all sides and under the imperial ban, he proposes a toast to the Emperor, altho deeming himself happier than the former, who is the soul of so crippled a body. In Act 4, in the *Rathaus* scene, Götz again shows love for the Emperor,<sup>96</sup> and in Act 5 (*Hauptmanns Zelt*) he laments the fact that the gypsy robbers are the only ones who protect the Emperor's subjects. On the other hand he becomes satirical (Act 4, *Rathaus*) when the councillor urges the populace to attack him. The medieval conception of the eternity of the Empire is well emphasized (Act 3, *Saal*) by the confidence that Götz expresses in its future.

Many years later, in a *Maskenzug* of 1818,<sup>97</sup> Goethe wrote of *Götz*:

*Die Schreckenstage, die ein Reich erfährt,  
Wo jeglicher befiehlt und keiner hört,  
Wo das Gesetz verstummt, der Fürst entflieht,  
Und niemand Rat und niemand Rettung sieht,  
Die schildr' ich nicht.*

Altho these lines were composed over forty years after the play, their claim may be considered accurate, for in *Götz* the

<sup>95</sup> This passage is taken almost verbatim from the *Autobiography of Götz*, Bieling ed., p. 55; in the *Urgöts* the description is still more drastic; similarly to Herder, Goethe here calls Germany a morass. Act 3 of *Urgöts* begins with a scene at the Diet of Augsburg, in which Maximilian vehemently asserts his rights. The later version does not contain this scene.

<sup>96</sup> His sentiments here are similar to those expressed by Luther. Weimar ed. of Luther, 30<sup>8</sup>, pp. 331-332.

<sup>97</sup> Weimar ed., 16, p. 281.

author considers only certain aspects of the theme, especially the so-called *Landfriede*, which Goethe knew as the Imperial Court of Justice, and the imperial army.<sup>98</sup>

In the course of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* Goethe offers a much more minute, powerful picture of his times. For example, the reminiscences that he gives in Part I, of his youth, contain many references to imperial history. Notable among these is the depiction in Book I. of the *Römersaal*, the walls of which were so covered with portraits of the Emperors, that room remained for only one more picture. Still more important and instructive, however, is the detailed description in Book V. of the coronation of Emperor Joseph II. at Frankfurt in 1765. On the whole it shows sympathy with, and interest in, the proceedings and in some respects may be called a poetic glorification of the ceremony, such as an aging poet might write in the case of any incident that had made a deep impression on him in his childhood. It is of considerable interest to compare with Goethe's description another coronation account by Karl Heinrich Ritter v. Lang. As an eye witness, he describes the festivities incident to the inauguration of Joseph II.'s successor, Leopold II., in 1790. His attitude is diametrically opposed to that of Goethe, for he gives us a very satirical and depreciative account of the ceremonies, describing them as unworthy of the most beggarly ruler.<sup>99</sup> He relates an absurd quarrel that arose over the question as to who was to serve the thirty-seventh dish at the imperial banquet, compares the bare, unadorned throne to a hen's roost (p. 167), and describes the imperial vestments as resembling cast-off clothing (p. 166). Especially the custom of roasting the ox and serving him to the Emperor is ridiculed (p. 168); and when the plundering rabble upsets the temporary kitchen, v. Lang sees in the fall of the structure a symbol of the impending ruin of the Empire.

<sup>98</sup> The review in the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* of 1773 shows that the play deals with contemporary conditions more than with the sixteenth century.

<sup>99</sup> *Memoiren*, 2. ed., Vol. I., pp. 163-170.

Other references in Goethe's autobiographical work will be briefly mentioned. In the seventh book of Part II. of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* there was originally an additional passage dealing with political conditions and supplementing the literary observations.<sup>100</sup> The section in the eleventh book referring to Goethe's Strassburg conversations on politics has already been mentioned. The twelfth book contains the description of the pitiful conditions prevailing at the Wetzlar court,<sup>101</sup> with its thousands of undecided cases, which were settled at the rate of 60 per year, and in this connection Goethe speaks of the Empire as a diseased organism, kept alive only by a miracle. He says<sup>102</sup> that it was impossible to forget that one was sojourning at Wetzlar and that one could notice there better than anywhere else the morbid symptoms in the body politic, especially the selfishness of the princes. At the end of the thirteenth book and again in the fifteenth book Goethe pays his tribute to Justus Möser.<sup>103</sup> But since *Dichtung und Wahrheit* was written some years after the collapse of the Empire, the passages here quoted have only a general historical value.

Allusions in other works of Goethe to the Empire are of more immediate interest. In *Jery und Bätely*, for instance, Thomas, who has retired from active service as a soldier, meets his old friend Jery, hears of his love affair and decides to assist him in it. But after being rudely treated by Bätely, he seeks revenge and another chance to speak to her. He drives his cattle, who are on the way to Milan, into the meadow of Bätely's father. The latter soon appears and demands an explanation. Thomas boldly answers:<sup>104</sup>

*In Polen und im Röm'schen Reich  
Geht's auch nicht besser her.*

Similarly the humorous poem to Kestner of January, 1773,<sup>105</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Weimar ed., 27, *Lesarten*, p. 389.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 28, p. 132 ff.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 238 and 318.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, p. 19.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, pp. 62 f.

beginning *Wenn dem Papa sein Pfeifchen schmeckt*, contains a sly allusion to the troubles of the Empire, and the prose introduction to these verses speaks of *das hl. Römisch Reichs Gerechtigkeits Purifikations Wesen*.<sup>106</sup> The state of affairs at the courts of justice is hinted at in the play *Die Aufgeregten*, Act I., Sc. 7, where Breme, speaking of a case pending trial at Wetzlar, says that no news has come of its progress and that if any had come, it would not have amounted to much. In explanation he adds that the litigation in question is already forty years old, and that there is no hope of its immediate settlement.<sup>107</sup> Later it appears<sup>108</sup> that because of the unpardonable procrastination of the imperial court even the public highways are being neglected. The prologue, finally, of the *Neu eröffnetes moralisch-politisches Puppenspiel* (1774)<sup>109</sup> refers to the Emperor in a disparaging way and asserts that all Empires are transitory.

The dissolution of the old Empire made but a slight impression on Goethe's mind, it seems. Only the following passage appears, without further comment, in the *Tag- und Jahreshefte*:<sup>110</sup> *Indessen war der Deutsche Rheinbund geschlossen und seine Folgen leicht zu übersehen; auch fanden wir bei unserer Rückreise (i. e., von Karlsbad) durch Hof in den Zeitungen die Nachricht, das Deutsche Reich sei aufgelöst.* Remarks, such as quoted above from Stolberg, are missing. In fact, says Wilhelm Bode,<sup>111</sup> a quarrel between a coachman and a servant engaged the interest of Goethe and Riemer more than did the political news.

### *Klinger.*

The references that Klinger makes to political events and conditions, found mostly in his philosophical novels, are to

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, *Briefe*, 2, p. 54.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, pp. 19 f.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35, Act 2, Sc. 2.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 16, pp. 3-5.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 35, p. 268.

<sup>111</sup> *Goethe im deutschen Zusammenbruch 1806, in Stunden mit Goethe* (1907), pp. 13-46.

some extent veiled and uncertain. Especially is this the case in his first work of the kind, *Geschichte vom goldenen Hahn* (1785), which he later revised and published as *Sahir, Ewas Erstgeborner im Paradies* (1797). The once innocent but now polluted Circassians remind one in more than one respect of the author's contemporaries. Their stagnant constitution, for instance,<sup>112</sup> the absence of politicians among them,<sup>113</sup> the easy-going nature of their ruler (p. 31), and the egoism of their councillors (p. 42) seem to have been emphasized by Klinger for a distinct satirical purpose. In fact, his irony becomes evident when he expressly compares the love of country, warmth, frankness, concern for the national welfare, and patriotism displayed by the Circassian delegates with "similar noble motives" of councillors in the Holy Roman Empire (p. 42). The golden cock, too, a peculiar symbolical invention of Klinger, may well contain hidden allusions, political and otherwise. It is even possible that Klinger had the Golden Bull in mind when he conceived the idea: for the cock seems to be a sort of *sine qua non* with reference to the welfare of the state (pp. 6-8).

In the *Geschichte eines Deutschen der neuesten Zeit* (1798), which has been called an answer to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, political allusions are more apparent. In the main they relate to the pitiful condition of Germany. The thought that Germans have no fatherland is vehemently spurned<sup>114</sup> and all patriots are called upon to prove their attachment to their country (X., 112). The novel *Der Weltmann und der Dichter* (1798), too, sometimes described as a reply to *Tasso*, and characterized by Rieger as the best of Klinger's novels, because it gives so vivid a picture of contemporary conditions, is valuable from a political point of view. It depreciates the ability and good qualities of statesmen, especially in the Germany of the Holy Roman Empire (XI., 63), and similarly to the previous work, laments the fate of Germany. "Air and dreams are still exempted from taxation in our dear Fatherland!" exclaims the man of the world (p. 125). Klinger's object in

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.* Novels, XII, p. 3.

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.* p. 4. Here Klinger makes it clear that he is writing satire.

<sup>114</sup> *ibid.* Vol. IX, p. 155. Cf. also Vol. X., p. 69.

these works, it seems, was to show that altho he had already been living for many years in far-off Russia, he still retained an active interest in political and social questions at home.

*Germania in Jahre 1795.*

Very important and successful satire at the expense of the imperial Diet, with its stiff, formal proceedings and its dragging methods appeared in an anonymous pamphlet entitled *Germania im Jahre 1795*. The patron saint of Germany, Germania, suddenly appears in the electoral chamber of the Diet at Regensburg and demands the convocation of the whole general Diet, in order that she may announce the will of the gods. Baron v. Strauss answers her request in the most stilted, unnatural language of the chancellery that he can command for the occasion, informing her that first she will have to go thru the endless routine customary in such cases. When she insists on immediate action, he finally acquiesces, on condition that she assume all responsibility for the unprecedented procedure. Incidentally he informs her that the hall in which the so-called process of correlation and relation takes place is in a dangerously dilapidated condition<sup>115</sup> and adds that it has been so ever since the time of the late Emperor Joseph II., who had expressed the hope that a falling in of the roof might hasten the recess of the Diet. Another passage in the same work ridicules the imperial army and describes the Diet as engaged in weighty deliberations on such questions as: Could the imperial army not wage war without bread and powder? Could the forts not be protected with airpipes rather than with cannon? In addition the dilatoriness of the various estates in granting military appropriations is satirized. One estate prefers to await the decision of the others, another votes as little money as possible, still another defers action pending the resolution of the Hanoverian council, which in turn must await instructions from London. In short, the author decides, the French will have to

<sup>115</sup> Biedermann, *Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert*, I., pp. 29-30, quotes the passage in question.

be requested to postpone their hostile campaign, until the momentous questions before the Diet have been solved.

*Jean Paul Richter.*

Among the poets and men of letters who lived in the latter half of the eighteenth and during the first decades of the nineteenth centuries, we find many admirers of Napoleon. Not only Goethe and Heine can be mentioned in this connection, but also Jean Paul Richter. The latter greets the great French general as the savior and guardian angel of Germany<sup>116</sup> and desires a league of princes and a long peace, protected by him. This general feeling of awe which Napoleon aroused in certain quarters of Germany may be explained to some extent as hero-worship, yet in part, at least, it followed naturally out of the political situation. It represents simply the recognition, on the part of Germans, of true greatness in Napoleon, and the subconscious desire for a similar leader east of the Rhine. Jean Paul well expresses this need of Germany when soon after the dissolution of the Empire he calls his own age a builder's scaffold and refers to the preceding period as having been even worse than a scaffold.<sup>117</sup>

*Romanticists — A. W. and F. Schlegel.*

Like Jean Paul the earlier Romanticists, too, still came under the influence of the old regime in Germany. But they were fortunately free from the prejudices of their predecessors. In their strong expression of individuality they protested against the patronizing, bureaucratic governmental mechanism of the absolute state.<sup>118</sup> Expression of nationalism and the pursuit of politics engrossed their attention for a time. Friedrich Schlegel compares the "genuine state," that is, Greek republicanism, with the political bungling of his own day and shows

<sup>116</sup> Nerrlich: *Jean Paul, Sein Leben und seine Werke*, p. 514.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 515.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. A. W. Schlegel's *Fastnachtsspiel vom alten und neuen Jahrhundert*. Böcking, *Werke*, II., p. 154. In an epigram, *ibid.*, II., p. 235, he ridicules 'the *Weilandheiligenrömischenreichsdeutschernationsperioden*.

in his early works a lively interest in political theories.<sup>119</sup> Hardenberg, too, studied the subject diligently. The fall of the old Empire, however, was to most of the Romanticists no cause for regret. Rather did they greet it as a favorable omen, a step toward the consummation of a German national state.<sup>120</sup>

*Görres.*

The interest that Josef Görres took in politics dates, on the whole, from a period subsequent to the year 1806.<sup>121</sup> Of importance, however, for our purpose is a satirical speech, *Rede, gehalten am 18. Nivose J. VI in der patriotischen Gesellschaft in Koblenz v. Bgr. J. Görres: Auf den Untergang des hl. röm. Reichs deutscher Nation*.<sup>122</sup> It was written after the Peace of Campo Formio (1797) and is in the form of a mock-serious funeral address over the body of a dear friend, the Holy Roman Empire, who is reported to have deceased on December 30, 1797, the day of the surrender of Mayence, at 3 P.M. in Regensburg, at the ripe old age of 955 years 5 months and 28 days. The departed friend, *das heilige römische Reich schwerfälligen Andenkens*, died of complete debilitation, complicated by apoplexy, but enjoyed full consciousness until the time of death, so that the last rites could be administered (p. 18). The speaker chides the Lord for having taken unto himself so soon the poor, innocent creature, which had the patience and endurance of a donkey (p. 18). A brief biographical sketch follows. At its birth (842) many portents took place, as for example the appearance of bloody dragons in the sky. The mid-

<sup>119</sup> Walzel, *Friedrich Schlegels Briefe an s. Bruder August*, Nr. 82.

<sup>120</sup> Poetzsch, *Studien zur frühromantischen Politik- u. Geschichtsauffassung*, p. 40. Friedrich Schlegel, however, was an enthusiastic admirer of Austria. Cf. his *Histor. Vorlesungen* (1810) passim, the *Concordia* (1820), and the poem *Huldigung* in *Werke*, 2. Aufl. Wien, 1846, Vol. X., p. 132. Dorothea Schlegel, who was under the influence of Friedrich, expresses the same sentiment. Cf. her letter to Karoline Paulus of June 30, 1806 (Unger, p. 92), in which she regrets the humiliation of the Austrian house.

<sup>121</sup> Uhlmann, *Jos. Görres u. d. deut. Einheits- u. Verfassungsfrage bis zum Jahre 1824*.

<sup>122</sup> Schellberg, *Ausgewählte Werke*, Vol. I., p. 16 ff.



wife first discovered the child. It was reared at the court of Charles the Simple, Louis the Child and others, was nourished with the blood of heathens and tutored by the Popes. From earliest childhood it preferred to study musty old archives rather than engage in war, but was aroused to action by interest in the Catholic Church and hate of the Turks. As a reward for its services it was canonized by the Popes while still alive and called "the Holy Roman Empire." But alas! it had human failings! Its sedentary life and its religious fervor affected its health. At the time of the crusades it became insane. Frequent bleedings and a strict system of dieting palliated its infirmities without curing them, and a hectic fever took the place of its insanity. For centuries it became the victim of terrible hemorrhages, which inundated all of Europe for half a century. From these it never recovered, but gradually grew worse, until the stroke of apoplexy took it by surprise, as it was sitting over its books. It was a patient, loving father, albeit a trifle awkward.

Its last will and testament is given in detail. The French Republic is to receive the left bank of the Rhine "as a token of love." The Elector of Trèves is to be munificently rewarded for his many services with the sword of Charles the Great, while the Elector of Hanover is to receive the Imperial Stockings. The Imperial Orb, the sign of world dominion, is given to the British premier Pitt. Many other equally humorous provisions are made, as for example, that the annual income of the Emperor (13,000 florins) is to accrue to the pawnshop of Regensburg, that the imperial knights are to be supplied with horses and sent as mercenaries to Russia, and that the Imperial Court of Justice is hereafter to meet in the hours of the moon, while the Deputation of the Empire shall declare its meetings permanent and then discuss the question of eternal peace, with the proviso that each article must be discussed and passed in not less than 50,000 sessions. Further, the imperial army is to be sold to the highest bidder and the double eagle on the coat of arms is to be fed to death. The inscription on the tombstone reads:

*Von der Sense des Todes gemäht, atemlos und bleich,  
Liegt hier das heilige römische Reich.  
Wandrer, schleiche dich leise vorbei, du möchtest es wecken,  
Und das Erstandene uns dann von neuem mit Konklusen bedecken.  
Ach! Wären die Franzosen nicht gewesen,  
Es würde nicht unter diesem Stein verwesen.*

*Fichte.—v. Gentz.—Folksong.*

This obsequial address is on the whole one of the most able and most telling satirical utterances extant on the subject of the Empire. If it were fitting to speak in this connection in terms of an ascending scale, it might be said that with it German literature reached its satirical climax, as far as the Holy Roman Empire is concerned. Quotations from other authors, whose utterances are less caustic and vehement and are couched in a milder form, as for instance from Fichte,<sup>123</sup> or from the historian Friedrich von Gentz,<sup>124</sup> would create an anticlimax. Satirical folksongs, too, became very frequent and popular toward the end of the period. One found at Salzburg and written probably in 1805 contains the lines (Str. 2):<sup>125</sup>

*Dem Kaiser Franz bleiben wir treu  
Bis ganz zugrund geht's Römisch Reich.  
Habet nur acht! es fehlt nicht weit;  
Sonst kommt die letzte Zeit.*

and another from Upper Bavaria, also of 1805,<sup>126</sup> ridicules Francis II. as a lackland (Str. 16 and 17). A third work, representing a conversation in Elysium between Frederick II.,

<sup>123</sup> *Reden an die deutsche Nation*, 14. Rede, Sämmtl. Werke, 3. Abt., 2. Band, p. 486; *ibid.*, p. 191 and p. 197.

<sup>124</sup> *Fragmente aus der neuesten Geschichte des politischen Gleichgewichts in Europa*, St. Petersburg, 1806, pp. xliii., xlvii. Especially important is a memoir of Gentz dated Sept. 6, 1804, Schlesier, *Schriften*, IV., p. 23 ff. The passage in question begins: *Wir sind ein zerstückeltes Volk* and gives a rapid review of imperial history with emphasis on the misfortunes and disasters and a description of what might have occurred if the fates had been more propitious.

<sup>125</sup> Hartmann, III., pp. 78 ff.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86 ff.

Frederick William II. and Joseph II., makes the latter admit that the sun of Austria is sinking.<sup>127</sup>

As was pointed out several times before, the subject by no means died out in literature simultaneously with the dissolution of the Empire. Among a countless array of references made to the Holy Roman Empire subsequent to 1806, those of Goethe, Grillparzer, Baumbach, Wedekind and Hauptmann that have been mentioned stand out. Heine, too, could be added to the list to prove that even the *ἐπίγονοι* were impressed by the great possibilities of the theme.<sup>128</sup> In truth, a careful scrutiny of the modern periodicals will reveal the fact that even today the Holy Roman Empire has not been forgotten.<sup>129</sup> It is and ever shall be a great warning example of the political axiom that a successful state must be constructed on the principle of centralization, of honest cooperation between the various members, and of efficient government in its three essential branches. Thus it served as a useful lesson not only to the reorganizers of Germany in 1871 but to the whole world at large. If this was its mission on earth—a welcome and pleasing assumption—it has after all left behind it on earth a noble heritage.

<sup>127</sup> Sauer, *Säculardichtungen-Literaturdenkmale des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, Nr. 91, p. 376.

<sup>128</sup> *Harzreise*, Elster ed., III., p. 74; *Buch le Grand*, Chap. 13, *ibid.*, p. 173; *Reise von München nach Genua*, Chap. 19, *ibid.*, p. 251; *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*, Chap. 15, *ibid.*, II., p. 463, Chap. 17, *ibid.*, p. 467; *Ueber L. Börne*, 1. Buch, *ibid.*, VII., p. 31. Cf. also Strodtmann's biography, II<sup>3</sup>, p. 187. Cf. also *Salon*, Elster ed., IV., p. 72.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Prof. Heyck in *Velhagen u. Klasings Monatshefte*, Jan., 1903 and Prof. Lamprecht in *Oesterr. Rundschau*, Jan.-Mar., 1915.

## APPENDIX A

### ENGLISH RENDERINGS OF THE LATIN AND OLD GERMAN CITATIONS

Rough prose translations of the more difficult Latin and Old German citations and titles occurring in the first four chapters are herewith submitted for the convenience of the reader who might experience difficulty with the original dialects.

#### CHAPTER I

*Page 5, footnote 7:* "And in order that the present treaty in all its points and articles may the better remain and be kept in honor and in the memory of the common man, we ordain and determine that hereafter for all eternity this our treaty shall be read . . . every year and be expressed and incorporated in said oath."

*Page 13, line 6:* "the emperor and monarch of all kings and princes of the earth."

— *line 9:* "We kings all owe allegiance to the Emperor, the highest king, as it were, who is the head and the leader of kings."

#### CHAPTER II

*Page 23, line 20:* "German lands are full of robbery. Courts, magistrates, coinage and tolls were once devised with honest intentions, but now they have become objects of thievery. All good measures that have ever been employed for the betterment of Christianity are now most readily violated by the highest and noblest personages."

*Page 24, footnote 6:* "To pass over other points, the kingdom of the Romans, which in Daniel is compared to a sword because of its singular rulership over the whole world, acquired by war and called by the Greeks a monarchy, has as a result

of so many changes, especially in our day, become the most novel empire when once it was the noblest. And so a poet says of the city, the senate and the Roman people: Barely the shadow of the great name lives. Forsooth, in passing from the city to the Greeks, from the Greeks to the Franks, from the Franks to the Lombards and then from the Lombards to the Teutonic Franks, it not only became antiquated but also gathered a sediment of filth and defects because of its very mobility, just as a bright stone which is cast hither and thither by the waters. In the very headship of the world its wretchedness is manifested, and the destruction of the headship forebodes the ruin of the whole body."

*Page 24, footnote 7:* "If anyone should say that the Roman Empire is not the monarch and the ruler of the whole universe in which Christ is worshipped, he is a heretic because he opposes the decree of the Church."

*Page 26, line 15:* "The Roman Empire will continue as long as God wishes. God has assigned to it its time and limit — May He grant that it become so great that the whole world be subservient to it, as is meet."

— *line 28:* "Just as the moon wanes when it disappears and weakens, thus, too, little is now left of you. Would God that you also might wax, so that you might resemble the moon. He who has not broken off a piece of the Roman Empire does not think that he possesses aught."

*Page 27, line 2:* "Every prince breaks something off, so that he may have a piece of it. Therefore it is not surprising that the Empire is bare and dismantled."

*Page 28, line 19:* "The Empire is hard pressed. I'll become an ape as I did in Merseburg."

— *line 25:* "I helped the king of England, who would have suffered complete destruction, had I not quickly come to his assistance. He would have been lost."

*Page 29, line 4:* "Don't lose heart if I should be a trifle slow in coming. Just keep me informed; after a while I'll be there."

*line 28:* "It has been announced that the war shall be deterr'd until five men have assembled, as I understand,

who shall settle the war with the permission of the lords and cities. I shall name these five, so that you may know them. The first shall be a surgeon who has never perspired, mark ye well. The second one I shall here describe: a huckster who has never lied. The third I shall mention: a miller who has never stolen. The fourth I shall now name: a man who is itchy and scabby but who has never scratched himself. He will fit well into this council. The fifth shall be a gambler who travels with his gains, commits nuisances every day, but never curses."

*Page 31, line 4:* "The cook is well worthy of punishment if he puts too much salt into the food."

— *line 15:* "History of the Roman Empire."

— *line 17:* "The temporal sword is all corroded; the spiritual would still do its duty, if only the leaders were friendly to one another and if the princes coöperated among themselves. Thus Christianity would be free from the rout of unbelievers, but as it is, the sorrow of one man is mockery for the other."

— *line 24:* "On the struggle and battle at Granson."

— *line 27:* "Austria, you are sleeping very long. O, that the song of the birds does not awake you! You have missed early mass!"

*Page 32, line 3:* "A more disgraceful rout has never been recounted. Rejoice, all ye Christians, for it would have gone hard with you. If Burgundy had gained a success, the whole Roman Empire would have taken a bound. That was the object of the enterprise! Therefore the Roman Empire furnished considerable assistance, as was meet. Mark it well. I care not a rap for the friendship of those who would desert me in time of need, when first it was their intention to reinforce me."

*Page 33, line 5:* "God is their liege lord, Mary their liege lady. Lightly they bear on their shields the Roman Empire."

— *footnote 26:* "They have much silver and gold, too. They can give abundant pay and lie in their beds."

"Bishop of Mayence, with your poem, which you write

with your Court of Justice, you wanted to force the Confederates to join you. You got into conflict with them and were hard pressed; you had to struggle with them."

### CHAPTER III

*Page 35, line 6:* "And altho the strength of the Empire may in itself suffice for preserving and defending the League, nevertheless the princes of the aforementioned League and their illustrious Senate in the district of Halle have begged us to confirm and to support the peace and its declaration as well as the Swabian League and the jurisdiction of the aforementioned Apostolical See."

— *footnote 6:* "Exhortation to the Empire to undertake a great campaign against the Turks."

— — "A complaint to God over the cruel ravages of the cruel Turk and his many wars and victories."

*Page 36, line 6:* "Entry of His Majesty Emperor Charles V."

— *line 17:* "All Roman Emperors in order, how long each one ruled, when, what customs he observed, and how he died, from the first to the present most powerful Emperor, Charles V."

*Page 38, line 8:* "A pleasing colloquy of the gods on the discord of the Roman Empire."

— *line 22:* "All ye gods, the Roman Empire together with the German nation is suffering discord and strife, and if no one will appease and unite in friendship the discordant parties, so that there be peace between them, the Empire must dissolve and will no longer be able to exist."

*Page 39, line 29:* "I am not surprised that things go so badly and that there is discord in the Empire, since Public Weal, the bulwark of the Roman Empire, resides neither with the high nor with the lowly. Much more do I wonder that the Roman Empire has not gone to destruction many years ago."

*Page 40, line 22:* "The complaining herald on princes and nobility."

— *line 27:* "A pleasing colloquy of the gods on the question why there are so many bad rulers on earth."

*Page 41, line 4:* "As it goes with the heavenly rulers, so it is, too, with those on earth. To be sure, they have about them early and late many wise councillors, but they follow them not and are rather deceived by enviers, hypocrites and triflers and by selfish traffickers in money."

— *line 12:* "A complaint of Germany and her colloquy with the faithful Eckhart."

— *line 27:* "A colloquy with the nine muses as to who is the original cause of the unrest in Germany."

*Page 42, line 21:* "A colloquy of the gods against the rebellious prince Margrave Albert and other princes and cities of Germany."

*Page 43, line 29:* "Complaint of the free cities of the German nation, or warning to the free and imperial cities of the German nation."

*Page 44, line 1:* "Complaint and warning against the excessive, un-Christian power of the Pope at Rome."

— *line 4:* "How could one rule well if the Empire were full of clergymen? That's why conditions are so good in the Empire and every one enjoys justice and equality!"

— *line 8:* "Dialogue or colloquy called The Spectators."

— *line 11:* "Among their princes, too, discord and perpetual private feuds exist, whereby they destroy one another." "Can't the Emperor settle them?" "Ought he settle them when they are to his advantage? For if they did not thus destroy one another, they would be too powerful for him."

*Page 45, line 5:* "(I) can write to Your Electoral Highness with good reason that it has never been my intencion or aim, and is not now, to slander anyone of the high or lower estates or to write, teach or preach anything that could afford a pretense for stirring up commotion, insubordination, disunion or rebellion in the Holy Empire, or for leading Christians astray, against all of which practices I have often written and preached vehemently."

— *line 21:* "Two discordant and perverse imperial edicts."

— *line 24:* "Whether soldiers can become blessed too."

*Page 46, line 14:* "For here you see how the wretched mortal



bag of worms, the Emperor; who is not for a single moment sure of his life, insolently boasts that he is the real highest defender of the Christian faith."

— *line 21*: "But if you do not wish to observe, and prefer to persecute, your baptismal duty and the Christian league made with Christ, then may a rogue obey you in my stead. I do not wish to blaspheme my God and to persecute His word because you wish it."

*Page 47, line 22*: "For so much is certain, that in Holy Scripture we can expect no more temporal events. All is done and has been fulfilled. The Roman Empire is at an end. the Turk has risen to the highest position, the splendor of the papacy is frittering away, and the earth is cracking in almost every corner, as if it were actually to break and to fall. For the fact that under our Emperor Charles this same Roman Empire is ascending a little and is becoming more powerful than it had been in many a day, suggests to me that it is ~~t~~he last empire and in the eyes of God similar to a light or a straw which, when it has burned entirely down and is on the point of failing, flares up as if it were now first beginning to burn, and is presently extinguished, just as Christianity is now doing with so bright a gospel."

*Page 48, line 4*: "So too it will be in Germany. I think that a great mist will follow the present light and that thereafter the Day of Judgment will come."

— *line 8*: "The Pope, too, has to this very day made repeated efforts to mend them and finds himself unable to restore them to their former condition. So too He (our Lord) will deal with Germany. He will take the pious unto Himself and thereupon make an end of the German land, for it has earned its punishment, and still there is no end in sight."

— *line 25*: "I do not want to play the hypocrite but tell the truth. See what a devil's strumpet rules in the Imperial Court of Justice, when the latter, a divine jewel in German lands, ought to be the one great solace of all those who suffer wrong."

*Page 49, line 17*: "(The German Emperor) is called Roman

Emperor, altho having no control of Rome, and at the same time he is expected to be dependent on the caprice of the Pope and his party, so that we have the name and they the land and cities, while they have constantly taken advantage of our simple-mindedness for their own aggrandizement. They call us mad Germans, who allow ourselves to be aped and befooled at their pleasure."

*Page 50, line 8:* "A poem in which is shown how pious Duke Henry of Brunswick is and how bad the Lutherans are."

— *line 14:* "Dialogue before the gates of heaven between Franz v. Sickingen, St. Peter and the knight St. George previous to the admission of the first-mentioned."

— *line 27:* "What is the Imperial Court of Justice?"  
 "It is as follows: He who has been released from the lower court, the purgatory as it were, gets into hell. For I really think that no soul can be tortured more severely by the devils in hell than a wretch who falls into the hands of a procurator, an advocate and that musty crowd, for there are so many actions, exceptions, replications, rejoinders, triplications, rebutters, postponements, peremptory adjournments, that there is no hope of settlement. Blood and flesh must both be consumed. If one case in a hundred is finally settled, the litigant must seek the execution of the judgment from the kitchen master of the house of Ochsenstein . . . from such a lack of justice it follows that if a poor man has no resources with which to see this long, intolerable procedure thru, he will undertake a feud, a course of hostility, or a war."

*Page 51, line 12:* "We, Lucifer, without the grace of God, disturber of holy Christianity, good morals and virtues, etc."

— *line 30:* "Ha, Belial, what sayest thou? Shall such a gracious, chaste friend of the nuns arrive so quickly at great power that we poor peasants must now fear him? Ha, that's why conditions in the Holy Roman Empire are so splendid!"

*Page 52, line 9:* "An almanac made from the Holy Bible for many future years."

— *line 12:* "Listen, then, you wretched Empire, the lackey and the laughing stock of the Romans and of all the world!

Your wise men have given foolish advice at Worms in the Diet before the wretched child Charles, called Roman Emperor, etc. (He is Emperor but his petty magistrates rule.)"

— *line 22*: "Luther, leave us Germans undisturbed, we want to remain the fools of the Romans. They have given us the stolen Empire, so that our bodies, property, honor and lives are now their property. Therefore we have shed so much Christian blood in quarrels. From God we await no reward."

*Page 53, line 24*: "Even when a few of the best men take an interest in the government and rule all with reason, every one must feel the advantage. As long as Rome, the famous city, believed and acted in this way, all was well. Rome was the ruler of the whole world."

*Page 54, line 9*: "Still they did not act inconsiderately when they made such a rule that in his oath the king, upon accepting the power, should swear by holy religion, right and justice to allow the entire Empire, the high and low estates, its freedom and to defend it against the caprice of all the parties."

— *line 23*: "So everything sways to and fro like a skiff in the wide sea, which floats about without a master and is the plaything of water and wind."

*Page 55, line 20*: "What honor then is it for you if you praise the old Germans highly, how they fought for their freedom and tolerated no wicked neighbor, while you do not respect your own freedom? You can hardly be safe in your land, you allow your neighbor to fasten his horse to your fence wherever he pleases."

*Page 56, line 10*: "Be of good cheer! I know an excellent society which pleases me above all. It is a jolly gathering and concerns itself right little about the Roman Empire. Whether it will perish today or tomorrow is of no importance to them."

— *line 27*: "We are right little concerned about the Roman Empire. Whether it will perish today or tomorrow is of no importance to us. And should it go to pieces—if only the hay is good. With this we will twist a rope which will hold it together."

*Page 57, line 14:* "Every empire which becomes divided against itself becomes desolate."

— *line 24:* "On the bridge at Magdeburg three little dogs lie. They howl every morning; they admit no Spaniard."

— *line 29:* "On the wall at Magdeburg an iron man lies. If the Emperor wants to win him, his Spaniards will have to undertake the task."

*Page 58, line 2:* "In the worthy town of Magdeburg there are many rifles. They mourn every morning because the Emperor does not want to come."

— *line 9:* "A bogey is journeying about the Empire—the Emperor is beating the drum with hands and feet, with swords and spears."

— *line 16:* "The Emperor is a tramp. He is riding over the meadow and bringing a sack of money."

*Page 59, line 4:* "Disunity destroys all empires but can create none."

— *line 11:* "They feared the Emperor's rage. The council was displeased. Hans Katte took it up in scorn: The Emperor is no god."

— *line 21:* "Let him who has ears hear how things go when an empire is destined to fall to pieces. First the head is deprived of his reason and opposes God in everything. His speech dotes on licentiousness and he lives on earth a law unto himself. Hence God says: If I be a mockery to you, you too must come to grief."

#### CHAPTER IV

*Page 62, line 5:* "The funereal and cadaverous appearance of our present Germany."

— *line 19:* "The Emperor has practically nothing save that he affixes his empty name and title to all imperial decrees."

— *footnote 8:* "The imperial insignia are objects of great ostentation but they are an empty shadow, to use a phrase of Pliny the Younger, and represent a name devoid of power. Truly, they contain little that suggests empire and power."

*Page 63, line 1:* "the family that is a bane to our Germany."

— *line 5:* "And as Alexander the Great says, just as physicians leave no infested part in diseased bodies, so we too should anticipate everything that obstructs our Empire, the foundation of which is liberty and not the absolute will of one individual."

— *footnote 11:* "an irregular body resembling a monstrosity."

*Page 64, line 13:* "Still the kings of Germany retain the term once assumed, albeit they have already for a long time omitted the coronation at Rome and have scarcely made use of any of the rights accruing to them from that ancient summons, since it is customary among rulers to relinquish the fact more quickly than the title."

*Page 65, footnote 12:* "It is popularly said that law cases at Speyer breathe (spirare) but never expire, the reason being that there is such a confusion of procedure and that there are so many cases hanging fire and so few assessors, but above all because the executive power is lacking."

*Page 67, line 10:* "In the third place, whereas many neighborly quarrels and differences continue to exist within and without the courts between the honorable house of Brandenburg and the common city of Nuremberg, said quarrels and differences, each and every one of them just as they have been handed down to the present day, in their present condition and character, shall without exception and on behalf of our gracious lords, Margrave Albert and Margrave George Frederick, and the city of Nuremberg, be withdrawn from the wearisome judicial proceedings and be discussed and settled in a friendly way."

*Page 68, line 16:* "O, if only the German Empire, which, timid, inconsolable and weak, is now caught in the meshes of death, would accept your counsel, Mayerne, the only faithful, wise and good counsel, it would not only receive solace, aid and salvation, but its heart, hand, brain, freed from timidity, debility and blind rage, would even attain immortality."

*Page 71, line 23:* "Why, we are German born. A nation

which has never lost its heart, which has in former days full often been worsted, which has never sought Roman power, from which many an Emperor has had to buy peace and which not one of them has to this day dared to attack, except when perchance it tore its own hair, as in the days of Charles V."

*Page 73, line 29:* "As one who has the lead in cards and sees another unexpectedly play a trump."

*Page 74, line 7:* "A new colloquy between St. Peter and Charles the Great in heaven on the present times."

— *line 23:* "A madman who with his own hand deranges his entrails and slaughters his friends as enemies: such a one is Emperor Ferdinand."

*Page 75, line 1:* "It is of no concern to him in what a way he enervates the Holy Roman Empire."

*Page 76, line 3:* "Ye honest soldiers, stand firm a little longer; a retreat will bring great disgrace to us and would be of little profit for me, since I am the Emperor's brother."

## APPENDIX B

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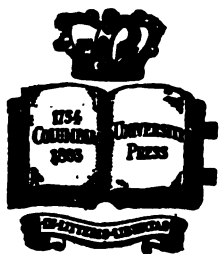
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# ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISHMAN IN GERMAN LITERATURE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY

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**TO  
THE MEMORY  
OF  
CALVIN THOMAS**



## PREFACE

The investigation of which the most significant results are presented in this monograph was suggested to me in 1917 by the late Professor Calvin Thomas, of Columbia University. Under his able and stimulating guidance I started to work in January 1919, but at the time of his sudden death in November of that year my task was still far from completion. To Professor Arthur F. J. Remy I am indebted for many hours which he gave to a helpful, constructive criticism of the manuscript in its *brouillon* stages, but it is perhaps to Professor Robert Herndon Fife that I am most indebted, especially since the beginning of his interest and participation in my work antedated by several months his official connection with Columbia University. It is a pleasure to record here, furthermore, my gratitude to Professor Frederick W. J. Heuser, who gave me many valuable suggestions, and to Professor Arthur George Williams, of William and Mary College, and Professor William Harrison Faulkner, of the University of Virginia, both of whom have given me much help and encouragement throughout a number of years of Germanic study.

Of the librarians who did much to aid me, I am under especial obligations to Mr. Frederick W. Erb, of the Columbia University Library, Mr. Frederick W. Ashley, of the Library of Congress, and Mr. William Warner Bishop, librarian of the University of Michigan. My thanks are due also to Professor Fife and my colleague, Mr. James McFadden Carpenter, Jr., of Haverford College, for assistance in reading the proof.

JOHN ALEXANDER KELLY

Haverford, Pennsylvania  
January, 1921





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## INTRODUCTION

There is no scarcity of information as to what Germans and Englishmen think of each other in modern times, and it may be reasonably expected that a great deal more literature on that subject will be forthcoming. On this very account especial interest centers around the attitude of the two countries toward each other at the time when an intimate—though somewhat one-sided—acquaintance was first established; that is, in the eighteenth century, especially in the last third of it. Particular value attaches to the impressions which one of the nations received of the other at that time, since these impressions were almost totally unaffected by anything like a political bias.

The object of the present investigation is to learn what the eighteenth-century German thought of the Britisher. Incidentally, some light will be thrown on English opinion of Germany and the Germans, in so far as it is obtainable from the German sources consulted.

The points of contact between Germany and England were numerous. Beginning with the year 1714, the two countries were brought into political affiliation through the house of Hanover. Northern Germany was bound to England by strong economic ties, and Hamburg in particular became the gateway of English *Kultur* into Germany. Naturally enough this interest in things English found abundant and far-reaching expression in the German literature of the period; almost any German writer of the century is, in fact, a possible source of information as to German opinion on England. Since it would be impossible to make a thorough investigation of all these sources, the first problem that arises is one of boundaries for the field of research. It is obvious that those Germans who visited England were best qualified to discuss English life and culture, and their writings were undoubtedly of the greatest importance in moulding German opinion. Accord-

ingly, the term *literature* is taken in its broadest sense, and books of travel, though ordinarily of very slight literary merit, prove for our purposes to be of the greatest value. Of these the most important were obtainable either in the original or in English translations; for those that were not obtainable, the exhaustive book reviews, notably those in the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, proved a fairly adequate substitute. Next in importance are essays and letters written, in most cases, by Germans who were, or had been at some time, in England. Material of this sort appears in abundance in the periodicals, of which Wieland's *Merkur* has most to offer. Such sources as the above mentioned have been exhausted in so far as they were accessible; but the same cannot be said of the imaginative literature, or *belles-lettres*. Here no effort is made to cover the entire ground; attention is restricted to the most important authors and to a few others—such, for instance, as Christian Felix Weisse—whose interest in Britain was especially marked.

The number of Germans who found their way to England in the eighteenth century is little short of astonishing. In fact, travel had already become very general. One important body of tourists were young noblemen, whose education was considered 'incomplete without an acquaintance with foreign lands. These young men visited as a matter of course the leading European countries, usually conducted by a tutor. Under this system of education many scions of noble German families visited England in the eighteenth century, as they had, to some extent, in earlier times. In Wieland's *Merkur* for October, 1784, we read of the mania for traveling<sup>1</sup>: "In no age of the world was travel so common as in ours, when it has become a sort of epidemic. Kings and princes leave their thrones in order, as private citizens, to become acquainted with foreign lands. . . . Hence it is no wonder—in our age of much travel and many books—that so many descriptions of travel are written." "Descriptions of travel," writes Johann Reinhold Forster in 1790,<sup>2</sup> "have become during

<sup>1</sup> "Ueber das Reisen," *Der Teutsche Merkur*. hrg. von C. M. Wieland. 115 Vols. in 70. Weimar, 1773-1806. Oct. 1784, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> *Magazin von merkwürdigen neuen Reisebeschreibungen, aus fremden Sprachen übersetzt*. 33 Vols. Berlin, 1790. Vorrede, Vol. I, p. I.

the last few years a *Modelektüre*, and in this the public has undoubtedly made a good choice." According to Sir Thomas Nugent, it was the Germans who set the pace for globe-trotters in those times:<sup>1</sup> "There is no nation fonder of traveling than the Germans; one meets with them in all parts of Europe, and should we admit that their natural parts are not equal to those of their neighbors—the experience they gain abroad makes an ample amends for what they are supposed to want naturally."

As to the goal of many of these tourists we learn something from Karl Heinrich Schaible:<sup>2</sup> "Incomparably more than any other European country England always had a peculiar power of attraction for Germans. Nowhere [else] did they feel at home so soon, nowhere [else] did they develop such a warm attachment to the land of their adoption. When I undertook an investigation of the presence of Germans in England in past centuries, their number astonished me; I was overawed by the immensity of the task I had undertaken." In fact, so numerous were the Germans in London that those who wished to learn the English language were seriously handicapped, as was the case with Johann Jacob Volkmann:<sup>3</sup> "The many fellow-countrymen whom a German will find it difficult to avoid, speak either their mother-tongue or very imperfect English." It has been estimated that there were between four and five thousand Germans in London at the middle of the eighteenth century and that the number had increased by the end of the century to six thousand.<sup>4</sup>

It is apparent, then, that eighteenth century Germans had every opportunity to become acquainted with the British, and that they made good use of their opportunities will be clearly established, it is believed, by the following pages.

Of the many Germans who resided in England Johann

<sup>1</sup> *The Grand Tour*. 3d ed. 4 Vols. London, 1778. Vol. II, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Geschichte der Deutschen in England von den ersten germanischen Ansiedlungen in Britannien bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Strassburg, 1885. p. 450.

<sup>3</sup> *Neueste Reisen durch England vorzüglich in Absicht auf die Kunstsammlungen, Naturgeschichte, Oekonomie, Manufacturen und Landsitze der Grossen*. 4 Vols. Leipzig, 1781. Vol. I, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> Schaible: op. cit., p. 368.

Wilhelm von Archenholz, best known as the author of a history of the Seven Years' War, was at the same time the most prolific writer on English life and one of the most ardent admirers of the English. His first work was a book in two volumes, *England und Italien* (1785), which met with such success as to justify, at least in its author's mind, a continuation in twenty volumes, to which he gave the title, *Annalen der brittischen Geschichte des Jahres* (sic!) *1788-1796*. Furthermore, England has an important place in the periodical *Minerva, ein Journal historischen und politischen Inhalts*, of which Archenholz was editor from 1792 to 1812. There is no doubt that he is too much inclined to see only the good qualities of the British; this fact is recognized, for instance, by Wieland.<sup>1</sup> It is true that England does not always appear to such advantage in the later volumes of the *Annalen* and in the *Minerva* as in the earlier writings, but this is due perhaps to criticisms from such reviewers as Wieland rather than to Archenholz' anglomania having given place, after the French Revolution, to gallomania,—as Robert Elsasser holds.<sup>2</sup> After Archenholz in voluminousness but before him in time comes Wendeborn as a writer on Great Britain. Gebhard Friedrich August Wendeborn, a Lutheran clergyman, went to England in 1767 and in 1770 took charge of a church in London, where he resided until 1793. His first work, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis Grossbritanniens*, appeared in 1780 and was later expanded into four volumes as *Zustand des Staats, der Religion, der Gelehrsamkeit und der Kunst in Grossbritannien gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts* (1784-1788). This is by far the most valuable work by a German author on Great Britain up to that time. Unlike Archenholz, Wendeborn is quite ready to recognize the faults of the British and is at times too severe in his strictures. A later writer on England who is otherwise almost entirely unknown is C. A. G. Goede. Of him it is interesting to note that, though he wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century, he is scarcely less enthusiastic in his

<sup>1</sup> See *Annalen der brittischen Geschichte des Jahres 1788-1796*. 20 Vols. Vol. I (Braunschweig, no date), p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> *Ueber die politischen Bildungsreisen der Deutschen nach England vom achtzehnten Jahrhundert bis 1815*. Heidelberg, 1917, pp. 70-72.

praise of the English than Archenholz. Since these three men, Archenholz, Wendeborn and Goede wrote intelligently on all aspects of British life, they are the authors most frequently cited.

Of less importance than the foregoing is Karl Ludwig, Freiherr von Pöllnitz, who in 1710, at the age of eighteen, started on his extensive travels over Europe, which continued for many years. In 1735 he became attached to the court of Frederick William I of Prussia as chamberlain. His *Memoirs* cover the years 1729-1733 and, so far as they have to do with Great Britain, are one continuous eulogy. A saner point of view is reached by Johann Jacob Volkmann, who visited England in 1761. His chief interest was in the fine arts, and his attention was attracted above all else to the valuable collections to be found in England. His *Neueste Reisen durch England* appeared twenty years after this tour, and for it he drew freely from previous writers, but he is not without independence of thought.<sup>1</sup> Better known than any of the foregoing is Karl Philipp Moritz, *Stürmer und Dränger* and, like Wendeborn, a Protestant clergyman. His *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahre 1782* is one of the few descriptions of travel from the period that are still readable. Moritz formed his own opinions, and they are by no means always favorable to the English. Even more obscure than Goede is J. G. B. Büschel, whose *Neue Reisen eines Deutschen nach und in England im Jahre 1783* was written as a pendant to Moritz' popular work. Büschel has no particular merit, but his book is of some interest as representing the extreme in indiscriminating admiration of the British. Enthusiastic as he is, however, he scarcely outdoes Karl Gottlieb Küttner, who traveled many years in England, Ireland, France, Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway, and who does not tire of pointing out England's superiority over other countries in general and in particular over France. By far the most interesting of the books of travel consulted is Johann Georg Forster's *Ansichten vom Niederrhein, von Brabant,*

<sup>1</sup> To the contrary, Elsasser (op. cit., p. 31), according to whom Volkmann simply re-echoes the opinions of Wendeborn.



*Flandern, Holland, England und Frankreich* (1791). The author was a son of Johann Reinhold Forster, the famous natural scientist, and both father and son were companions of Cook on his epoch-making tour around the world (1772-1775). Georg Forster is to be relied upon for a discriminating, impartial attitude toward the British. The only one entitled to be mentioned in the class with Forster is the well-known scientist and satirist, Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, who offers no comprehensive work on the British, but who has much of interest and importance to say of them here and there in his writings. In Andreas Riem—available for this study only in the book reviews—we encounter the only consistently anti-British writer of the entire period. On account of its hostile attitude, his *Reise durch England* (1798-1799) occupies a unique position among the works considered.

A word is in order as to the treatment of the two phases of English culture that most interested the Germans; namely, *literature* and *politics*. An adequate discussion of these subjects, particularly of the former, is far beyond the scope of this monograph. Nothing more is attempted than to show in a general way how the German reacted toward English letters and English political life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The student of English literary influence on Germany will find invaluable the bibliography compiled by Lawrence Marsden Price: "English-German Literary Influences." *University of California Publications in Modern Philology*. Vol. 9, No. 1 (1919), pp. 1-111. Pages 19-50 are devoted to the eighteenth century.

As for the German attitude toward English politics see Robert Elsasser, *Ueber die politischen Bildungsreisen der Deutschen nach England vom achtzehnten Jahrhundert bis 1815* (Heidelberg, 1917. Completed July 1914, having been expanded from a doctoral dissertation); and Frieda Braune, *Edmund Burke in Deutschland*. (Heidelberg, 1917.) Both of these works were obtained after the completion of the present study, in connection with which Elsasser's book is of especial interest. He takes as his point of departure an article—not available to the present writer—by R. Philippsthal: *Deutsche Reisende des 18. Jahrhunderts in England: in der Festschrift zum 13. Neuphilologentag in Hannover 1908* (Hanover, 1908), of which the purpose is simply to "incite further investigation." Elsasser gives a full account of the travels of Germans to England between 1750 and 1815, always with special reference to their political impressions. Comparatively few of the tourists, however, offer discriminating comments on politics; it is often possible to present their ideas on this subject

Finally, it may be well to say something regarding the quotations that are so freely used. In the first place, only the occasional verses that are quoted appear in the German original. Many of the other passages were obtainable only in the very imperfect eighteenth century translations. Sources that were found in the original German editions—and such sources furnish by far the greater part of the quotations—were translated into English by the writer. In a few instances translations were quoted, even when the original was obtainable; this was the rule, in fact, for passages from modern works of which satisfactory translations were to be had. An examination of the foot-notes and of the bibliography will invariably establish the identity of the translator, except in the case of a few anonymous translations from the eighteenth century; and these versions are on the whole so poor that it is easy enough to understand why no one would care to affix his name to them. In short, unless otherwise indicated, the writer is to be held responsible for all translations.

in a few sentences. On the other hand, the author does not hesitate to record the tourists' impressions of other important phases of English life, and in so doing he not infrequently enters the general field of the present investigation, in so far as the latter has to do with the opinions of Germans who visited England after the middle of the century.

Another monograph of similar interest, though dealing with a later period, is the doctoral dissertation of John Whyte: *Young Germany in its relation to Great Britain*. Menasha, Wisconsin, 1917.

*Germany and the French Revolution*, by G. P. Gooch (London, 1920), an admirable book with which the present writer became acquainted only after his own monograph had gone to press, presents a number of interesting comments on German opinion of the English state and government.



## CHAPTER I

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLAND

The first impressions of the German visitor to England in the eighteenth century were almost invariably favorable. After the disagreeable, sometimes perilous, passage of the English Channel, it would have been a temporary relief to land on a barren island; the inconvenience experienced in reaching the country doubtless enhanced its attractions for the newcomer. Even today, in well appointed vessels that make the run in less than an hour, the voyage is not always a pleasure, but in the small, dirty ships of a century or two ago the passenger was exposed to serious annoyances and found himself at the mercy of wind and wave. The tourists who recorded their experiences seldom failed to refer to these discomforts. Among these is Uffenbach, who visited England about the middle of the century and who says:<sup>1</sup> "It went surprisingly well the first two hours (so long as we were still in sight of land on one side). But when we reached the high sea, where the water is swollen and deep and the waves are greater, the ship and our hearts commenced to dance at the same moment, and our heads to go around. We proceeded at a remarkable speed, and the sails were drawn with such force that the ship became, on one side, even with the water, while the other side was tossed so high that we could not even remain seated, much less stand, without taking a firm hold." This writer continues with a painfully realistic, though illuminating account of the sad effects of the rough sea on his fellow-passengers, maintaining, of course, that he himself came off somewhat better than the others.

The marked variance to be found in the statements regarding treatment received at the hands of customs-house officials is due in part, perhaps, to the varying states of mind in which

<sup>1</sup> *Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland und Engelland.* 3 Vols. Ulm, 1753. Vol. II, p. 428.

the travelers arrived, dependent, in turn, upon the fury of the waves and the time required for the passage,—this latter being a very indefinite factor. On the whole, the baggage inspectors seem not to have molested their victims very seriously. Büschel, whose visit dates from 1783 and who, by the way, spent thirty-two hours on board the *Prince of Orange* in crossing the Channel,<sup>1</sup> had been prepared by one of his fellow tourists for serious interference from the officials, but he found the inspection to be largely a matter of form.<sup>2</sup> Lichtenberg, who made the first of his two trips to England in 1770, did not come off so easily with his baggage inspection.<sup>3</sup> "The customs officials boarded our ship [at Harwich] and searched our pockets and clothing in the roughest manner." He adds that a landing was effected only at the peril of the passengers' lives, as they were compelled to go ashore in a little boat which was an easy prey to the rain and wind and high waves. Albrecht von Haller, who visited England forty years earlier, found the inspection of baggage less annoying than in France. He says in this connection:<sup>4</sup> "One is not very exacting except in suspicious cases. If smuggled goods are found, only those are seized of which the importation is prohibited, without further punishment; while in France the seizure is attended with a heavy penalty, often corporal punishment." It is hardly necessary to add that the strictness of the customs officials varied from time to time with changing political and economic conditions; but in general the foreigner met with little difficulty in gaining admission into England for himself and for such personal belongings as his needs required.

The first town visited was usually Harwich, which, as such,

<sup>1</sup> The German tourist made the voyage to England ordinarily on the packet-boat from Helvoetsluis to Harwich. If he chose to go by way of France, there were two routes open to him; from Calais to Dover or from Dieppe to Brightelmstone (Brighton), the latter being the more popular. Cf. Albert Leitzmann: *Zeitschrift zur deutschen Philologie*. Vol. XXXVI (1904), p. 424.

<sup>2</sup> Büschel, J. G. B., *Neue Reisen eines Deutschen nach und in England im Jahre 1783*. Berlin, 1784. p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Bruchstücke aus dem Tagebuch von der Reise nach England. Vermischte Schriften*, 8 Vols. Göttingen, 1844. Vol. III, p. 273.

<sup>4</sup> *Tagebücher seiner Reisen nach Deutschland, Holland und England 1723-27*, hrsg. von L. Hirzel. Leipzig, 1883. p. 119.

received more attention than its importance justified. However, the tourist had scant praise for this village and was usually glad enough to make his sojourn there as brief as possible. Uffenbach, cited above, complains of being held up six days in Harwich on his homeward trip. "This is all the more annoying," he finds,<sup>1</sup> "because one can see and do nothing in this poor spot, is badly treated and must pay out an enormous sum of money. . . . The captain could have sailed earlier, but they have an understanding with the landlords and defer their departure as long as possible."

As the tourist continued his way to London, he soon forgot the hardships of his passage, the annoyance of the inspection by customs officers and the brief, uninteresting stay in Harwich. The natural beauties of the country and the busy life of its inhabitants absorbed his attention and fully compensated him for all the hardships he had undergone. German writers usually agree in testifying to the mildness and healthfulness of the climate in England, though they do not all indorse the opinion of an early geographer<sup>2</sup> of the century, who tells us that "the climate of England is so temperate that one has no need of heated rooms there as a protection from the cold of winter; nor of grottos or caves to temper the heat of summer." The prevalence in Germany of an impression that the climate of England was not altogether healthful is indicated by the following refutation of such a belief, from Archenholz' *England und Italien*.<sup>3</sup> "The low mortality in the provinces, the large number of aged people living in England, as well as the beautiful complexion of the English woman, which is acknowledged to surpass that of all other European women, prove that the unhealthfulness of the climate and the fatality of the coal smoke are chimeras of the imagination." Coal smoke and the open fire were considered very pernicious by Germans who did not stay long enough in England to become accustomed to new conditions. To the former was attributed

<sup>1</sup> *Merkwürdige Reisen*, etc. Vol. III, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Berckenmeyer, P. L.: *Neuvermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius*, 6th ed. Hamburg, 1731. p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*. 118 Vols. Berlin und Stettin, 1765-92; Kiel, 1792-96. Vol. LXXI (1787), pt. 1, p. 8.

much disease and to the latter, the poor eye-sight of the inhabitants of the country, as indicated by the large proportion of them who had to wear glasses, even at a very early age. Küttner, on the other hand, believed the smoke from coal to be healthful, acting as the best corrective of the dampness in such regions as Lancashire.<sup>1</sup>

On no other score are eighteenth century German writers more consistent in their praise of England than in what they have to say of the physical appearance of the country. Not only do they find Nature there at her best, but the hand of man has been active to beautify his abode in every possible way. The fine roads, beautiful parks and handsome country residences arouse the lasting admiration of all visitors. Küttner, whose love of England was increased, after an extended residence there, by a visit to France [in 1787], records his first impressions of the land of his adoption:<sup>2</sup> "When I traveled from Dover to London five years ago, everything was striking, everything new to me, everything admirable. It was my first visit to this island. Never had I seen such fine roads, such clean inns, such excellent horses and carriages and such handsome equipage, never so many neat, attractive homes of peasants." The anglomania of this writer prompts him frequently to compare France with England to the almost invariable disadvantage of the former. On the road from Calais to Paris he deplores, above all, the total lack of those numerous country estates which add so much to the natural beauty of the landscape, making of England one enormous park.<sup>3</sup> He testifies, furthermore, to the charm and attractiveness of English villages, giving them, in this regard, first place, but not failing to record that those of Holland surpass them in neatness and cleanliness, while German and Swiss towns do not suffer in comparison with the others.<sup>4</sup>

Among the German writers who have enthusiastic praise

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. CX (1792), part I, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis vorzüglich des gegenwärtigen Zustandes von Frankreich und Holland*. Leipzig, 1792. p. 2. (Küttner visited France in 1787 and again in 1791.)

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 239.



for English scenery is Karl Philipp Moritz—a friend of Goethe—whose unhappy experiences on a foot-tour through England failed to dampen his ardor for the beauty of the country. "The earth is not the same everywhere," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "How different did I find these rich, fertile fields, the green of the trees and hedges, the whole Elysian landscape, from ours and from all the others I have seen! How splendid these roads, how firm this earth under my feet; at every step I felt that I was walking on English soil." He goes still further in extolling the beauties of England over the scenery of his own country, telling us that the most commonplace region of those he visited in England would pass for a paradise in Germany.<sup>2</sup> According to Haller, only the absence of vineyards marred the perfection of the English landscape.<sup>3</sup> But the scenery of England was found to be so pleasing in the springtime that only his gallantry prevented Baron Bielfeld from pronouncing it the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. As it was, he wrote to a certain "Mademoiselle von —":<sup>4</sup> "After you, nature has never yet offered anything to my sight so beautiful as the spring in England. The grass that now grows is thicker and more luxuriant and forms a finer turf than is to be seen in any other country of Europe; even the verdure itself appears to me brighter."

It was not the scenery alone that made a tour of England in the eighteenth century so delightful to a visitor who had traveled extensively on the Continent. In no other country of Europe were found such favorable conditions of travel, in no other except France were the roads so good, nowhere were finer horses and carriages to be found, and nowhere were the postillions more capable and obliging.<sup>5</sup> Above all, the English

<sup>1</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahre 1782 (Deutsche Literaturdenkmale des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts, V. 126—Berlin, 1903)*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> *Tagebücher seiner Reisen, etc.*, p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters of Baron Bielfeld*, translated from the German by Mr. Hooper. 4 Vols. London, 1768. Vol. IV, p. 157. (April 25, 1741.)

<sup>5</sup> We must, of course, bear in mind that the visitor's impressions of England were based largely on a comparison of the conditions he found there with those of his own country, so that he gives us frequently a relative, rather than an exact view of what he saw. W. E. Mead, in his interesting work, *The Grand*



inns surpassed those of other countries in cleanliness and comfort, if not in cuisine. For all these advantages the tourist had to pay rather dearly, and frequent are his complaints of the exorbitant charges of the landlord, which had to be supplemented by gratuities to each and every one of the numerous servants lined up at the door to see him started off aright; that is, with a lightened purse. For the most part, however, the visitors were willing to pay English prices for the comforts they enjoyed and to deliver themselves for a season into the hands of the country's profiteers, hoping—if we may judge at all from the innumerable titles of such works to be found in the book reviews of the century—to retrieve their lost fortunes, upon their return home, by publishing an account of their travels and experiences.

In the year 1777 Dr. Carl Heinrich Titius, a naturalist, made a tour of Holland, England and France. As to transportation, he says:<sup>1</sup> "However rapidly one may travel in France in the stagecoaches and however good, too, are the French roads; still, the special service of England has the advantage of better horses and carriages, and one can travel, by means of them, perhaps faster, also somewhat more cheaply than in France." Of the vehicles, Büschel says:<sup>2</sup> "With a slight alteration these chaises would pass as carriages of state in Germany, so handsome they are and at the same time such elegant, comfortable conveyances. Not a nail is missing, not a spot is to be seen, nor the slightest rent in the upholstery." He continues with a comparison of travel in England and Germany. In the former country, at the end of each stage the traveler finds horses already harnessed and a driver awaiting him. Almost before he knows it, he is again speeding on his way. In Germany, on the other hand, *Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston and New York, 1914, p. 43), tells us that the overturning of a coach in the immediate neighborhood of London was a very common incident, and that in wet weather there was in London a veritable slough between Kensington Palace and St. James' Palace. But the same writer points out (*ibid.*, p. 68) that the conditions of travel in Germany were even more primitive.

<sup>1</sup> Bernoulli, Johann, *Sammlung kurzer Reisebeschreibungen*. 16 Vols. Berlin, 1781-83. Vol. X, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 27.

the exchange of horses is accomplished only with confusion and involves a delay, which is frequently as long as the time required to make a distance of ten or twelve miles in England.

The German visitor to England, after a single experience, could be counted on to avoid a trip on the outside of a coach. Johann Georg Forster gives a description of the torments of traveling in such a manner:<sup>1</sup> "The seat is endurable, but very hard, and one holds to a crooked iron bar, which is fastened as a balustrade to the edge; but the feet must be firmly planted against the coach-box, which results in giving the entire body a violent shaking. In such a seat one has not a moment's safety, once the iron rail is released. Never is one comfortably seated, and, accordingly, a change of position is necessary every five minutes. In short," he concludes, "I know of nothing that can compare with it, save the torments of a German stage-coach." Nevertheless, as the unfortunate Moritz observes,<sup>2</sup> the poorest man would rather run the risk of breaking his neck as a passenger on the outside of a coach than travel even a short distance on foot. Goede, twenty years later, finds this condition unchanged.<sup>3</sup> "On account of the splendid roads and excellent inns, which we may expect to find even in the villages, England would be well adapted to foot-tours, but the latter are still almost as unusual as at the time when Moritz wandered painfully through Derbyshire."

In their praise of the inns visitors to England were almost unanimous. The cleanliness, the cheerful atmosphere, the careful attention of landlord and servants to the comfort of the guest, made the latter feel at home from the moment of his arrival. Forster has much to say about the excellence of English inns. In them, he writes,<sup>4</sup> "all is attention, and the most ordinary traveler is treated as if he were the first lord. The servants run to the carriage as soon as they see someone

<sup>1</sup> *Ansichten vom Niederrhein, von Brabant, Flandern, Holland, England und Frankreich* (1791), *Sämmtliche Schriften*. 9 Vols. in 5. Leipzig, 1843. Vol. III, p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen*, etc., p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> *England, Wales, Irland und Schottland*. 2nd ed. 5 Vols. Dresden, 1806. Vol. V, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 378.

arriving; the landlord himself appears and welcomes his guests. He serves them at the table, and the chamber-maid sees to it carefully that the beds are fresh and clean." Nemnich, who traveled somewhat later in England, does not agree with Forster as to the hospitable reception of all guests at the inns. He advises the tourist to drive up in state, unless he can reconcile himself to being assigned to very poor lodgings, for which, however, he would have to pay the price of the best.<sup>1</sup>

Goede contrasts English inns with those of his own country:<sup>2</sup> "All travelers confess that they were most pleasantly surprised by the elegance of the hostelries in all parts of England. One often finds inns in English villages with which the large hotels of many a German capital would not bear comparison." Küttner, in 1791, after extensive travels over Europe, professes to know of no nation that can even remotely compare with England in respect to the excellence of entertainment to be had by the tourist in the country.<sup>3</sup> In particular, he finds that French inn-keepers have no conception of the cleanliness, elegance and comfort one finds in almost any English inn.<sup>4</sup> We might go on indefinitely citing passages from eighteenth century German writers in praise of the English inn and its proprietor; their enthusiasm does not surprise us, in view of contemporary conditions in Germany as described by foreign visitors. One of these, an Englishwoman, Marianna Starke, writes<sup>5</sup> that "the Germans seldom have a wash-hand basin in any of their country inns; and even at Villach, a large town, we could not find one: the inn we slept at, however, (its sign the Crown) is clean and good, though tall people cannot sleep comfortably either here or in any part of Germany: the beds, which are very narrow, being placed in wooden frames, or boxes, so short that anybody who happens to be above five feet high must absolutely sit up all night supported by pillows; and this is, in fact, the way in which the Germans sleep."

<sup>1</sup> *Neueste Reise durch England, Schottland und Irland*. Tübingen, 1807. p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. V, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von Frankreich*, p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>5</sup> *Letters from Italy between the years 1792 and 1798*. 2 Vols. London, 1800. Vol. II, p. 209.

It would be a mistake to believe that German visitors found everything about the English inn to their liking; as to the food, it usually did not please them at first, and only after a long residence did some of them come to prefer it to their own or to that of the French. In fact, in this one respect the German regularly found himself better off in France than in England. He complains that the food is too raw, there is too much meat, the inevitable roast beef does not appeal to him, the vegetables, prepared without seasoning, he finds insipid. Lichtenberg was among those who did not care for the food, however much he liked England in other respects. "The Englishman," he says,<sup>1</sup> "cooks his soups in his stomach, and so he is certain of not allowing the substance to escape."

While the food was not altogether to the German's liking, he was usually well pleased with what he had to drink. Comments on the amount of tea consumed by all classes are frequent. Wendeborn asserts that three times as much tea is drunk in England as in all the rest of Europe together.<sup>2</sup> But luckily for the German in England, he did not find himself dependent upon tea as his chief beverage. Archenholz, who enjoyed a long residence there, would probably have considered it unsafe to tarry so long, had prohibition been in force. He discovered that<sup>3</sup> "a foggy air and nourishing food make it necessary to drink strong liquors in England. Those who use water," he attests, "often lose their health and sometimes their life." Nor does Büschel find his happiness disturbed by the necessity of drinking tea; "The commonest drink at table," he tells us,<sup>4</sup> "is small beer and strong beer or porter, seldom ale. The last two drinks are quite to my liking; I can drink like a real Englishman, and few days pass that I do not drink three pots of this splendid strong beer without experiencing the slightest discomfort."

<sup>1</sup> *Bruchstücke aus dem Tagebuch von der Reise nach England. Vermischte Schriften.* Vol. III, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> *Der Zustand des Staats, der Religion, der Gelehrsamkeit und der Kunst in Grossbritannien gegen Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts.* 4 Vols. Berlin, 1785. Vol. I, p. 312.

<sup>3</sup> *A Picture of England*, translated from the French (of *England und Italien*). 2 Vols. in 1. London, 1789. Vol. II, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 41.

London in the middle of the eighteenth century counted about 600,000 inhabitants. To the German visitor, familiar only with the small cities of his native land, it was a never-failing source of wonder. It was always the goal of his travels to England, and he arrived always prepared for a thrill. The illumination of the streets did not fail to make its impression on every foreigner. Moritz refers to it, relating the same anecdote that was told, in varying form, of numerous visitors to London: "The lamps are lit," he says,<sup>1</sup> "while it is still day, and they are so close together that this ordinary lighting has the appearance of a festive illumination; for which it was taken by a German prince who came to London for the first time and who believed seriously that it had been arranged in his honor." The shop windows, too, come in for a large share of the stranger's admiration. In them were displayed the choicest products of art and industry from the four corners of the earth. Moritz could see no necessity for text-books and engravings with which to instruct children; they had but to go through the city streets in order to see everything for themselves; for paintings, works of art and luxuries of all kinds were exhibited to the best advantage in the show-cases and windows of the shops.<sup>2</sup>

One of the early German visitors to England in the eighteenth century was Baron Pöllnitz, whose first recorded visit was in 1728. Not considering Harwich worthy of his notice, he hurried on to London, which he describes<sup>3</sup> as "that city which, for its extent, the number of its inhabitants and their wealth, may pass not only for the capital of a powerful kingdom, but even for the capital of Europe: that city where true liberty bears rule; where the arts and sciences are cultivated and protected; where the inhabitants enjoy the goods of fortune without vain ostentation; where merit is considered and birth highly valued, when accompanied with virtue: that city, in fine, where are still to be found those Roman souls which other nations admire, but know not how to imitate." Fif

<sup>1</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen*, etc., p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> *The Memoirs of Charles-Lewis, Baron de Pöllnitz*. Translated from the German by Stephen Whatley. 5 Vols. Dublin, 1738. Vol. III, p. 263.



years later Lichtenberg, on the occasion of his second visit to England, writes of London in the same glowing terms to his friend, Dietrich:<sup>1</sup> "London is quite after my own heart. I like it not so much on account of the many amusements, for those are trifles, but on account of the politeness and respect with which one is treated, so soon as one only makes himself presentable and pays for what he eats and drinks."

Küttner, like many of his fellow-countrymen, in his enthusiasm for London gives Paris second place.<sup>2</sup> He admits that it is difficult to compare the two cities, since each has good and bad features; but of the former he allows London a larger, and of the latter, a smaller share.<sup>3</sup>

The admiration of the eighteenth century Germans for London, however, did not blind them to its shortcomings. None of them claimed that it was a city of beauty; the streets were, for the most part, narrow, crooked and ill-paved, and the public buildings were usually a disappointment to the visitor. Those that in magnificence came up to his expectations suffered frequently from their unfavorable environment to such an extent that they did not produce nearly the same effect as less pretentious structures in other parts of Europe. In general, too, as we shall see later on, Germans did not assign to English architecture a very high place. It was

<sup>1</sup> *Briefe*. 3 Vols. Leipzig, 1901. Vol. I, p. 219 (Feb. 15, 1775.)

<sup>2</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von Frankreich*, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> That London continued to fascinate the German visitor after the period we have under consideration may be seen from what Heine—whose hatred of England is as pronounced as the anglomania of the majority of his compatriots—has to say on the occasion of his first visit to the metropolis, in 1827: "I have seen the greatest wonder which the world can show to the astonished spirit; I have seen it and am still astonished; and still there remains fixed in my memory the stone forest of houses, and amid them the rushing stream of faces of living men with all their motley passions, all their terrible impulses of love, of hunger, and of hatred—I mean London." (*Englische Fragmente. Sämmtliche Werke*. 21 Vols. Hamburg, 1876. Vol. III, p. 15. The passage quoted is from a translation by Charles Godfrey Leland in the *German Classics*. 20 Vols. New York, no date, Vol. VI, p. 137).

No less vivid was the impression of London on Theodor Fontane, who spent there the summer of 1852 and who, on viewing the city, was overcome with "the feeling of the infinite—the same feeling that thrills us at first sight of the ocean." (*Aus England und Schottland*. Berlin, 1900. Pt. I, p. 4.)

primarily English life that made London so attractive to the stranger within its gates. Certainly that was the case with Archenholz, as it was with many of his fellow-countrymen. He asserts that the attractions of the entire country are so numerous that<sup>1</sup> "no stranger ever remains there any time without being attached to it by some secret charm," and Baron Pöllnitz was so delighted with his stay in London that he declared he would renounce the most brilliant offers of fortune elsewhere, if he could only have a thousand pounds a year in England.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 304.

## CHAPTER II

### POLITICS AND RELIGION

With the exception of English literature, it was English politics that claimed the largest share of the attention of the German public, and to the German in England nothing else was of more interest than the government of the country, its laws and political institutions.<sup>1</sup> To give a complete presentation of German views on eighteenth century English politics would be equivalent to writing the political history of England of that period, so abundant is the material available for such a task. The object of the present investigation is not to follow German writers through the intricate course of the nation's domestic and foreign affairs during the period under consideration, but simply to ascertain what was in general the German opinion of the English state. As may be readily conceived, the Germans who came into contact with English life were impressed, above all, with the freedom and democracy of the nation, and this impression is reflected in all their writings, whether of a political nature, or not. Since love of freedom and a democratic spirit have always been recognized as traits of the individual Englishman, they will be taken up later on in our study of the English character.

The unfailing interest of the British public in politics was, of course, something new to the German. "In general nothing is more difficult," writes Archenholz,<sup>2</sup> "than to make an Englishman speak; he answers to everything by *yes* or *no*; address him, however, on some political subject, and he is suddenly animated; he opens his mouth and becomes eloquent: for this seems to be connected, from his infancy, with his very existence. . . . Nothing but politics is heard in any society: they talk of nothing but about meetings to consider the affairs of the state, deputations to present petitions,

<sup>1</sup> See Intro., p. XVI.

<sup>2</sup> *A Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 67.



remonstrances, etc." Moritz was one of the many Germans in whom an interest in politics was first awakened by a visit to England, for, as he explained,<sup>1</sup> he had not found it at home to be a subject worth while. Vincke, who visited the country in 1800 and some years later [1808] wrote a treatise on its government, voices the opinion of his countrymen when he says:<sup>2</sup> "Among the various interesting prospects which a closer acquaintance with Great Britain offers, the most remarkable is undeniably the great machine of state in the entire domestic administration of the kingdom, without the visible participation of the governing power." To Albrecht von Haller England was virtually a model monarchy, of which the principles of government went back in an unbroken line to Alfred the Great. In the introduction to his *Alfred, König der Angel-Sachsen* [written 1773],<sup>3</sup> he says: "How the constitution, manners and religion of a people may undergo frequent alterations, while through all such vicissitudes the love of freedom may still remain inherent in them and display proofs of its influence on every occasion; how this general sentiment, exalted by all private interests, may yet in no particular give use to any excess, but may produce an equilibrium of power in the whole fabric of the state; how this spirit of independence may find the way of limiting the power of the king by means of a parliament, and the authority of the latter by means of the king, and the influence of one house by that of the other; and how these strong and multifarious bonds of liberty may give to all classes of the people a lofty elevation of character; all these great and splendid problems find their solution in the history of the English nation."

The constitution of England usually won the admiration of the Germans who studied it, though they were not blind to its defects. Archenholz is one of its strongest defenders; Wendeborn on the other hand often makes it the object of his severest criticism. Volkmann, who resided for some time in Great Britain, finds the chief advantage of the constitution

<sup>1</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen*, etc., p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Darstellung der innern Verwaltung Grossbritanniens*. Berlin, 1815. p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Translated into English by F. Steinitz under the title of the *Moderate Monarchy*. London, 1849. See p. XXV.

in its allowing to each branch of the government authority to promote the common good, but to no one branch the opportunity of jeopardizing the nation's welfare or of suppressing the action of another branch. The king has his hands free to benefit his subjects, but his powers of doing them harm are restricted. On the other hand, Volkmann considers it unfortunate for England that the nation is divided into two parties and holds that private interests are generally responsible for party alignments. As a further defect he regards the extent of the crown's influence, especially in the lower house, where the need and avarice of the representatives make them a ready prey to bribery and corruption.<sup>1</sup>

To the eighteenth century German, coming as he did from a country composed of small absolute monarchies, each under the rule of a prince who was, potentially at least, a tyrant, the question of the king's power and his relation to the people was of especial interest. Berckenmeyer, whose naïve statements are usually more entertaining than instructive, says:<sup>2</sup> "The majesty of the king is so inviolable that the mere thought of laying hands on his sacred person and killing him is considered high treason and *lèse-majesté*. To them [i.e., the kings] is shown such respect that it amounts almost to worship." He goes on to tell us that the kings of England, like those of France, possess the power of healing goitres by their touch. Helfferich Peter Sturz in a letter from London dated September 5, 1768, and first published in the *Deutsches Museum*,<sup>3</sup> gives an interesting discussion of the king's position. He says that the visitor to London, unfamiliar with the English constitution, who saw the king on a state occasion, surrounded by his bowing courtiers, would believe himself to be not in the land of freedom, but at the court of some oriental sultan. "A few steps from this scene," he continues, "in the St. James Café, he finds a newspaper which reviles the government in terms of seditious insolence. For a long time he can not decide which of the two phenomena was a dream. He is

<sup>1</sup> Volkmann, J. J. *Neueste Reisen durch England*. 4 Vols. Leipzig, 1781-83. Vol. I, p. 49 ff. (Volkmann's visit to England was in 1761.)

<sup>2</sup> *Neuer vermehrter Curieuse Antiquarius*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>3</sup> 26 Vols. Leipzig, 1776-88. 1779, Vol. I, part 2, p. 97.

unable to explain the contradiction; finally he believes with the crowd that the regal splendor was only an empty spectacle and that the newspaper is the spirit and voice of an unruly people. . . . Nevertheless," the writer concludes, "an English king, so long as he does not rule arbitrarily, is a powerful lord, and, if it is possible for happiness to dwell on a throne, a happy one." Baron Pöllnitz, that consistent lover of all things English, says:<sup>1</sup> "All that find fault with the English for disaffection to their kings have not duly read their history, or are fond of slavery; and they who think a king of Great Britain is to be pitied because he is not absolute, have a false notion of kingly power. A monarch of England is capable of doing as much good as any king in the world, but he can do no wrong."

Germans whose *Wanderlust* took them to England could count on being highly entertained by a visit to Parliament, and they were usually surprised, frequently shocked, by what they saw there. In a century that produced Robert Walpole, the two Pitts, Burke, Fox and so many other great statesmen, they were naturally impressed with British eloquence, but they also had an opportunity to look around and observe some peculiar English customs. Moritz, who declared he would have considered himself well repaid for his trip to England, had he seen nothing else than the Parliament, gives a graphic account of what he saw there, but he has little to say as to what he heard:<sup>2</sup> "It is nothing unusual to see a member of Parliament stretched out on one of the benches, while the others [members of Parliament, doubtless] are engaged in debate. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges, or whatever else the season offers. The coming and going is almost continuous." Nor does this German school-master consider the speakers sufficiently polite in their allusions to one another; of this he says:<sup>3</sup> "Very surprising to me were the open insults with which the members of Parliament referred to each other, one of them saying, for instance, as another took his seat, 'what the honourable gentleman has just said is quite ab-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahre 1782*, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 34.

surd.'" Wendeborn, during his long residence in London, frequently attended sessions of Parliament. According to him, too, the order was not the best, though he states that it was much better in the upper than in the lower house. Of the latter, especially, he tells us that "many are absent in body and many in their spirit, which is busied with thoughts of horse-races, fox-chases and cock-fights. During the most important debates many eat nuts or other fruits; many sit half asleep until it is time to vote, when those who are committed to the minister already know whether they are to say yes or no."<sup>1</sup>

With but few dissenting voices German writers of the eighteenth century testify to the mildness and excellence of British laws and courts of Justice. Haller declares that the laws of England are milder than those of any other European country,<sup>2</sup> and Pöllnitz says:<sup>3</sup> "All the laws here are mild and not severe. There are no tortures, nor are such made use of even in conspiracies. . . . There are but two sorts of execution known here, hanging and beheading." Talbot, in Schiller's *Maria Stuart*,<sup>4</sup> affirms that it was not the purpose of the founders of the British Empire that austerity should characterize its system of justice:

Die Stifter dieses Reichs,  
Die auch dem Weib die Herrscherzügel gaben,  
Sie zeigten an, dass Strenge nicht die Tugend  
Der Könige soll sein in diesem Lande.

A contributor to the *Neue Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*<sup>5</sup> records that in general there is in Germany a very high conception of English laws and courts of justice, but is inclined to believe with Hassel, whose *Briefe aus England* he reviews, that these are among the English institutions that have been over-rated by Germans.

Even Wendeborn, of whom his countrymen agree that he is too assiduous in ferreting out the faults of everything

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Tagebücher seiner Reisen*, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 291 (Whatley's translation).

<sup>4</sup> Act II, Scene III.

<sup>5</sup> 107 Vols. Kiel, 1793-1806. Vol. II (1793), pt. 2, p. 325.

British,<sup>1</sup> admits that the accused may expect to receive "all the consideration and indulgence that is compatible with the laws."<sup>2</sup> The same writer, however, sees no mildness in the decrees of the English courts, since the death sentence, which, in his opinion, should be reserved for murder alone, is much too frequent.<sup>3</sup> Büschel, too, finds too much severity in the indiscriminate sentences of the courts.<sup>4</sup> "Whoever steals five shillings or its equivalent is hanged; whoever practices any sort of forgery is hanged; and whoever commits the most horrible crimes and outrages is likewise hanged." Goede, on the other hand, himself a lawyer, testifies to the justness of the decisions of English courts.<sup>5</sup> "In no other country in the world is the sentence of the judge more highly regarded; in no other country are complaints of partiality and injustice of the courts more seldom heard."

To most Germans the system of trial by a jury of one's equals seemed a great boon for the accused, but Hassel and Wendeborn, again, saw chiefly the disadvantages of this method. The jurymen, according to the former, were frequently totally ignorant and devoid of all conscience, inasmuch as the upright citizen shunned the whole affair.<sup>6</sup>

Georg Forster, who attended the trial of Warren Hastings, is enthusiastic in his praise of English justice. He estimates that about two thousand people attended each session of the court in Westminster Hall during this trial and that easily five hundred thousand, in all, may have witnessed the judgment of their fellow countryman. It is in this general participation of the people in the proceedings of the courts that Forster finds the great advantage of the English system of justice. "Divine publicity!", he exclaims,<sup>7</sup> "sublime dignity of justice that does not shun the light! Let no people, no country,

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, *Neue Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*. Vol. XXV (1796), part 2, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 69.

<sup>5</sup> *England, Wales, Irland und Schottland*. Vol. II, p. 129.

<sup>6</sup> N. A. d. B. Vol. II (1793), pt. 2, p. 325.

<sup>7</sup> *Ansichten*, etc. *Sämmtliche Schriften*. Vol. III, p. 367.

no town dare call itself free, so long as its judges determine the destiny of their fellow men behind closed doors!"

The common law of England is recognized as a great advantage to the citizens of the country. Wieland felicitates<sup>1</sup> them, for instance, on the protection their unwritten law gives them against the outrage, quite common at that time in Germany, of publishing without permission letters injurious to the writer. Johann Georg Zimmermann observes that the English themselves know how to appreciate this feature of their legal system:<sup>2</sup> "These self-satisfied islanders consider their common or unwritten law . . . such a model of perfection that as early as 1469 Chancellor Fortescue, in his work written in praise of the same, held that it was a sin even to question it."

As to the prisons of England, Wendeborn believes them to be more numerous and more crowded than those of any other country. "The criminals are always very numerous, and the number of those who are deprived of their freedom on account of debts," he tells us,<sup>3</sup> "is almost incredible." Schäffer attempts to correct the impression in Germany, for which he holds Archenholz partly responsible, that English prisons were clean and comfortable. He found them dark and dirty, and the debtors' prison, King's Bench, of which he had expected so much, he pronounced little better than any similar institution in Germany.<sup>4</sup>

Frequent are the comments on the fortitude with which the English met the death penalty and on the manner of its infliction. Pöllnitz says that those who undergo the ordeal without fainting are extolled to the skies by the populace as having died like gentlemen:<sup>5</sup> "The execution of criminals here is a perfect show to the people, by reason of the courage with which most of them go to the fatal tree. I lately saw five carried to the gallows, who were as well dressed and seemed as well pleased as if they were going to a feast." Wendeborn thinks that nothing could be more cruel than

<sup>1</sup> *Der Neue teutsche Merkur*, 1797, Vol. I (April), p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, 4th ed., Zürich, 1768. p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup> *N. A. d. B.* Vol. XXV (1796), pt. 2, p. 308.

<sup>5</sup> *Memoirs of Charles-Lewis, Baron de Pöllnitz*. Vol. III, p. 292.

an English execution:<sup>1</sup> "To hang someone, then, while he is still alive, to take him down and open his living body in order to remove his heart, then to cut off his head, and finally to quarter him, and yet to say of other nations that they are barbarians in their punishments, is certainly forgetting one's own barbarity in judging others." It is very usual for German visitors to condemn the morbid interest which the English populace takes in hangings, and they often express their surprise that so many are present to witness these sad scenes; however, their own accounts of executions are so detailed as to make it appear that they speak of them from first-hand knowledge.

While two countries could scarcely have differed from each other in politics more than Germany and England in the eighteenth century, such was not the case in regard to religion. In both countries religious tolerance prevailed, both allowed free sway to the various sects that were established, and, toward the end of the century, the "free-thinker" was as much at home in Germany as in England. Accordingly, the German did not find so much that was new to him in religious as in political conditions. Whatever he thought of the Church of England and the other sects, he usually acknowledged that the English were a religious people and that the country was a great stronghold of Christianity. Albrecht von Haller says on this point:<sup>2</sup> "In theology, church history, natural laws, investigation of the human soul, they are unsurpassed." Küttner in his *Beiträge zur Kenntnis vorzüglich des Innern von England und seiner Bewohner* discusses the religion of the country and concludes that there is "far more Christianity on this island than in Italy and France."<sup>3</sup>

As for the Church of England, Wieland considers it very narrow in its orthodoxy,<sup>4</sup> and Wendeborn affirms that it is by no means responsible for the religious tolerance of the country.<sup>5</sup> Concerning the Episcopal clergy opinions vary,

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Tagebücher seiner Reisen*, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*. Vol. CX (1792), pt. I, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> *Der Neue teutsche Merkur*, 1796, Vol. 2 (August), p. 339.

<sup>5</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. III, p. 191.

but they are usually conceded to be highminded men. In this connection Baron Pöllnitz does not speak with his customary assurance:<sup>1</sup> "Whether these gentlemen are more sober than our clergy I know not; but by appearances I am almost tempted to think that they have the same thirst for honor and wealth, the same cares and uneasiness; in fine, that they are men alike." Moritz, himself a clergyman as well as a pedagogue, confirms the doubts raised by Pöllnitz:<sup>2</sup> "The English clergy, especially in London, are distinguished by a very free, dissolute life." But the extreme view is that of Andreas Riem, who refers to the English bishops as the "worthless representatives of Christ in England, villains who resemble only one of the apostles of the Saviour, the red-bearded scoundrel who betrayed him."<sup>3</sup> Such statements are, however, very rare and are by no means to be taken as really representative of German opinion. As to the mental qualifications of the clergymen of the two countries, a German correspondent from London to the *Deutsches Museum* writes (May 5, 1779)<sup>4</sup> that "it may be easier to find a man who knows the ways of the world among the distinguished English clergy than among our superintendents, etc. At the universities the great uniformity of the social classes, education and studies, which include only mathematics and *belles-lettres*, is an advantage to everyone. . . . But among the lower clergy," the writer continues, "the vicars and curates who really perform the duties of the offices, are found to be in England such ignorant, starving, cringing creatures as are hardly to be met with in any other Protestant country." Küttner says that the English clergy might be characterized as having no distinctive character; that is, that they are not distinguished, as in other countries, by a peculiar manner of life. As the chief traits of their moral character, he cites dignity and good-breeding and, especially, generosity and tolerance.<sup>5</sup> Else-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen*, etc., p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*. 208 Vols. Halle, 1785-1849. 1800. Vol. IV, No. 299 (Oct. 21) section 160.

<sup>4</sup> *Deutsches Museum*. 1779, Vol. II, pt. 9, p. 285.

<sup>5</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von England*, etc. 16tes Stück, N. A. d. B. Vol. XXIX (1797), pt. 2, p. 410.



where he tells us that the English clergy is the most respected class of men he knows of in any land, being even more highly regarded than the nobility of their country; and he declares that, on the whole, they are worthy of the high esteem in which they are held.<sup>1</sup>

The multitude and variety of religious sects in England could not fail to attract the foreigner's attention. Gottfried Achenwall, in his *Staatsverfassung der heutigen vornehmsten Europäischen Reiche*<sup>2</sup> attributes these numerous schisms to the Englishman's love of the freedom to believe what he wants to, and to confess what he believes. "Still," he adds, "it is certain that, as no country has hatched out more peculiar opinions in spiritual matters than England, no other, either, has produced greater representatives of the Christian religion." Volkmann expresses the same opinion:<sup>3</sup> "The whimsical bent of the Englishman toward believing what he wants to, is partly responsible for the peculiar religious opinions that some have advanced. . . . Yet in England the true religion, too, has found very valiant defenders."

Of the different sects, the Methodists come in for the largest share of attention and the scantiest of praise. It may be presumed that Germans were somewhat familiar with the teachings of this new and rapidly growing denomination before coming to England, as the Methodists had much in common with the Moravians of their own country. Archenholz in his strong commendation of the Methodists and their leaders stands almost alone.<sup>4</sup> His chief adversary in this, as in most other matters pertaining to England, is the Lutheran clergyman, Wendeborn, who says:<sup>5</sup> "I have heard many Methodists preaching on the highways in portable pulpits, and it has often rent my heart, when I stopped to listen a few minutes, that common sense and religion should be so outraged. . . . They paint man in such terribly black colors that, if what these people say were true, the thoughtful hearer would ask

<sup>1</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von Frankreich*, pp. 152-158.

<sup>2</sup> 7th ed., Göttingen. 2 pts. in 1 Vol. 1790, pt. I, p. 307.

<sup>3</sup> *Neueste Reisen*. Vol. I, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> See *A Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 168, ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. III, p. 148. See also Vol. I, p. 101, footnote.

why the beneficent Creator of all things . . . should give existence to such a race of reprobates and monsters." Goede, too, who has unmitigated praise for the Presbyterians, condemns Methodism as a religion particularly unsuited to the English temperament. "To be sure, the Methodists preach humility, love of order and voluntary obedience," he admits,<sup>1</sup> "but nevertheless the harmful effects of this gloomy sect on the character of its adherents is unmistakable. The Englishman is by nature of a serious disposition. One may easily imagine, then, the evil effect on him of a system of faith that damns as sinful every natural impulse of joy and every cheerful pleasure and makes a duty of gloomy melancholy."

While the Methodists did not always receive the best of treatment at the hands of German authors, the Quakers on this score had no grounds for complaint. Goede again expresses the general opinion of German residents in England when he says:<sup>2</sup> "A sect which in England, where publicity watches every step and exposes every mistake, has steadily maintained for so long the reputation of honesty, respectability and unassuming virtue, is certainly far above the suspicion of hypocritical sanctimoniousness."

The German of the eighteenth century who looked into the condition of religion in England was impressed by the tolerance that prevailed throughout the various sects. He found that Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents, Quakers, Jews and all the others, performed the interrelated tasks of their business and professional life without friction, that they dwelt together as neighbors and extended each other the hand as friends without concerning themselves about differences in creed.

<sup>1</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. II, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 202.

## CHAPTER III

### ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The industrial and commercial importance of England was already beginning to loom large in the eyes of Germany by the middle of the eighteenth century, but for many decades Great Britain's material progress was regarded by the Germans as a benefit rather than a menace to other nations. It was to England that Germany turned for her early lessons in industrial development, and English wares were held in the highest esteem on the Continent. Nearly a half century after the close of the period under our consideration [1842] Friedrich von Raumer could still write of England's economic advancement as an unmitigated blessing to the world:<sup>1</sup> "England is the first kingdom, comprising the whole earth, uniting all nations. However, her chief importance and value does not lie in her geographic expansion, but in the highest material activity, connected with scientific progress and praiseworthy zeal for religious development. England is the eye of the spirit which turns toward all corners of the earth, active in all zones, preparing a noble future for mankind." But that England did not seek the participation of mankind in the preparation of this noble future, that her great commercial activity was not the outcome of an altruistic spirit, was already clearly recognized by Schiller:<sup>2</sup>

Seine Handelsflotten streckt der Brite  
Gierig wie Polypenarme aus,  
Und das Reich der freien Amphitrite  
Will er schliessen wie sein eignes Haus.

Friedrich Wilhelm Taube, an early German economist, finds in her material prosperity the secret of England's great-

<sup>1</sup> *Repten* 3 Vols. Leipzig, 1842. Vol. III, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> "Der Kunst des neuen Jahrhunderts." *Sämt. Werke*. Säkular-Ausg.

ness:<sup>1</sup> "By means of nothing else than the improvement and encouragement of agriculture and industry, England has risen in a period of two hundred years to the power and greatness in which we now see her."

German writers have no difficulty in pointing out the causes of English supremacy in industry and commerce. Friedrich von Gentz,<sup>2</sup> who is the partisan of the English against French charges of corrupt policies in their commercial relations with other countries, shows that the principles which determine the superiority of Great Britain in European manufacture are twofold, partaking of both a positive and a negative character. Among the positive causes of British economic prosperity he cites<sup>3</sup> "the incomparable activity of the English nation, the extent of its capital, its wonderful improvements in all kinds of machinery, the great expertness of its navigators, the labors of a government studious of its real interests, the excellence of its internal constitution, its political and individual character." Another cause he finds in the intrinsic superiority of the products of the nation's industry. Negatively, he attributes English supremacy to<sup>4</sup> "the comparative weakness and indolence of other nations, their ignorance of political economy, their neglect of many branches of industry and their necessary dependence on the activity of foreigners, consequences of their own faults." This second factor in England's industrial progress had already been pointed out by various German writers, among them Taube, who said:<sup>5</sup> "The inefficiency, laziness and sleepiness of other nations busies so many hands in England that one does not know whether to wonder more at the idleness of the former or the industry of the latter."

To the excellence of English wares German writers testify

<sup>1</sup> *Abschilderung der engländischen Manufacturen, Handlung, Schiffart und Colonien*. Wien, 1777. pt. I, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting account of the English influence on Gentz, see F. Braune: *Edmund Burke in Deutschland*. Heidelberg, 1917. pp. 139-181.

<sup>3</sup> *On the State of Europe before and after the French Revolution*, trans. from the German by John C. Herries. London, 1802. p. 323 (German original, 1801).

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 340.

<sup>5</sup> *Abschilderung der engländischen Manufacturen*, etc. p. 59.

without a dissenting voice. In the *Teutscher Merkur* for January<sup>1</sup> 1798 we read in a letter from a German resident of London that every pursuit which in other countries is merely an acquired trade is in England an art in itself, as no one cares to be a "low mechanic." Achenwall pronounces the Englishman the best artisan in the world,<sup>2</sup> "for he works so that he will be satisfied with what he produces and always gives to his work the highest degree of perfection that he has once learned and attained. And as the Frenchman seeks to enhance the external value of his commodities by all kinds of adornment, the Englishman strives to give to his, by means of the utmost exactness and durability, a less transient internal value." This persistent striving after perfection and dissatisfaction with anything short of the best is a characteristic of the British artisan and artist that Küttner, too, commends to his countrymen. A telescope-maker like Ramsey, he tells us,<sup>3</sup> demands for a telescope "a price which deafens the ears" and from which there is not a shilling's reduction, but this same Ramsey does not hesitate to smash an instrument worth thirty or forty pounds if it fails to come up to his standard of absolute perfection.

Nemnich, before the elaboration of his *Waaren-Lexikon*, intended for publication in twelve languages, realized that his work would lack completeness, unless he undertook a trip to England, "the present seat of the most highly developed industry, in order to learn everything at first hand."<sup>4</sup> Accordingly he made the voyage in 1797. He marveled at the high state in which he found English manufacture. "How wonderful is this unique island!" he exclaims.<sup>5</sup> "All the innumerable articles of necessity and luxury produced according to the most complete, attractive and tasteful design, all the commodities which, from shop to shop, offer new charms to the wondering stranger, are not of foreign manufacture, but the genuine products of British national industry."

<sup>1</sup> *Sammlung der . . . Europäischen Reiche*, Pt. I, p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> *Sammlung der Kenntnisse . . . von England*, etc. 7tes Stück, N. A. d. B.

<sup>3</sup> *Sammlung der Kenntnisse*, Pt. I, p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> *Sammlung der Kenntnisse*, Vol. LVI (1801), pt. I, p. 243.

<sup>5</sup> *Sammlung der Kenntnisse*, Pt. I, p. 181.

Another of the causes frequently mentioned as contributing to England's success in industry is the workman's contentment with his lot and his inclination to seek advancement by excelling at his own trade rather than by exploring new fields. On this point Küttner says:<sup>1</sup> "Nowhere is the craftsman less infected by the folly of abandoning his position for a higher one than in England. To earn as much money as possible and to procure for himself an independent fortune is his ambition, and toward this goal he considers the way best which his father traversed before him. Such craftsmen are still to be found on the Continent only at Basel."

Eighteenth century Germans generally agreed, it seems, that England's chief merit in the realm of industry did not consist in inventive genius, but in perfecting the processes invented by others.<sup>2</sup> Even Büschel, an avowed friend of the British, rates England second to France in creative ability, but declares that it is the English who first bring everything to perfection.<sup>3</sup> Goede, however, dissents entirely from this opinion.<sup>4</sup> To him it would seem that the possibilities of human inventiveness were already exhausted, if every-day experience in England did not prove man's ingenuity to be boundless.

It has already been stated that Germany was quick to profit by the industrial progress of Great Britain. We have seen that Achenwall, looking on England as the great laboratory of practical economics, made a tour of the country in 1799 in the interest of science. But long before this Germany had begun to send investigators to England to study in the factories the latest manufacturing processes with a view to their introduction into German industry. Such, for instance, were the two young economists, Reisel and Müller, sent to England in 1765 by Minister von Schlaberndorf of Breslau "in order to collect for their Fatherland valuable data on agriculture and manufacture."<sup>5</sup> In fact, the German in

<sup>1</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von England*, etc. A.d.B. Vol. CX (1792), pt. I, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wendeborn: *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 221.

<sup>4</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. III, p. 160.

<sup>5</sup> For their report see Bernoulli's *Sammlung kurzer Reisebeschreibungen*. Vol. XIII, p. 325.

England seems to have made it a point to learn, for the benefit of his own country, as much as possible about English industry. That he met with no particular difficulty in accomplishing this purpose is attested by one Büsch, who visited England toward the close of the century:<sup>1</sup> "As the British are so glad to accept German workmen in their shops, it is not easily possible to prevent the disclosure of their inventions." With very few exceptions, however, German visitors found that the English made no effort to keep their manufacturing processes secret, but willingly shared their superior knowledge with the foreigner.<sup>2</sup> Germans were not without appreciation of the benefits which England's commercial ascendancy yielded them, if we may take as representative the attitude of Friedrich von Gentz, who says:<sup>3</sup> "All Europe is extremely interested in the existence of a people among whom industry and ingenuity have been carried to so wonderful an extent; by whom numerous objects of general consumption are provided comparatively cheap and of excellent quality; and whose astonishing activity affords a striking, and not always fruitless example to other countries. The commercial greatness of England is, in all these respects, a manifest advantage to Europe."

It might seem that a consideration of the Britisher's commercial spirit and his love of wealth and luxury should be taken up in our study of his character, but as these qualities of the inhabitants are so closely connected with the industrial system of the country it is perhaps best to consider them here. Archenholz tells us that<sup>4</sup> "no part of Europe exhibits such luxury and magnificence as the English display within the walls of their dwelling houses." Even the workingman, according to our German sources, had in England a higher standard of living than in any other country and was unwilling to deprive himself of the comforts of life, although his determination to satisfy his material demands often reduced him to pauperism.<sup>5</sup> Klinger, who, with the exception of Andreas

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*. Vol. LXXIII (1787), pt. 1, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Nemnich: *Neueste Reise*, etc., p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> *On the State of Europe*, etc., p. 347.

<sup>4</sup> *A Picture of England*, Vol. I, p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> See Weech, J. F.: *Reise über England und Portugal nach Brasilien und den*



Riem, seems to be the most anti-British German up to his time, accuses the English of crass commercialism:<sup>1</sup> "In England one now speaks of nothing but trade; certain other words which were formerly sometimes heard there, are entirely obsolete. I expect that trade will soon be preached from the pulpits there as the sole doctrine of happiness and salvation." This passage has a strangely modern ring, and still more do the following words from Karl August von Rade's *England in seiner tiefsten Erniedrigung*<sup>2</sup> seem to come from the Germany of 1914: "According to their way of putting it, the British, to be sure, are 'worth' a good deal, because they possess immense riches, but the philosopher and the historian will not measure them by this standard. On the contrary, their treasures will be considered the *irrilamenta malorum*, which have reduced them to such degradation." Goede had already brought the same charge against the English, though in somewhat milder terms:<sup>3</sup> "Many individual traits in the life of the English people seem to confirm the judgment of those who accuse them of a passionate *Geldsucht* and a petty, contemptible, striving for gain. The question, 'what is a man worth?' does not refer, according to the English usage, to his merit but to his fortune." We find frequent expression of the belief on the part of German students of English civilization in the eighteenth century that the country was facing ruin and dire calamity, brought on by an excess of prosperity. Even in the *Deutsches Museum*, a periodical into which an adverse criticism of England seldom finds its way, we read that<sup>4</sup> "Great Britain is nearing the point at which Rome stood

*vereinigten Staaten des La Plata-Stromes während den Jahren 1823 bis 1827.* (3 Vols. in 2. München, 1831.) Vol. I, p. 55, for an interesting discussion of this subject.

<sup>1</sup> *Betrachtungen und Gedanken über verschiedene Gegenstände, 1801-1802. Sämmlische Werke.* 12 Vols. in 6. Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1842. Vol. XI, pt. I, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> München and Berlin, 1915. p. 71. A reprint of a work which appeared anonymously in 1808. We might suspect this entire volume to be modern anti-British propaganda, if the mention of the original in Holzmann und Bohatta's *Anonymenlexikon* did not preclude such a view.

<sup>3</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. II, p. 326.

<sup>4</sup> 1779. Vol. I, pt. II, p. 101.



when Asia was plundered. Her triumphs in the recent war, her conquest of India, have spread wealth and corrupt customs, luxury and arrogance. The heroism of a nation is strengthened by resistance and weakens, once its ambitions are realized. This state has reached the point of maturity which borders on decay."

The English kings, however, were not inclined to participate in the extravagance and luxury of their people. German visitors to the court usually expressed their surprise at finding royalty so poorly housed. Archenholz is one of those who give us their impression of the king's surroundings:<sup>1</sup> "No sovereign in Europe is so badly lodged, keeps so poor a table or sacrifices so little to his pleasure. The economy of the court is such that I myself was present at a ball at St. James when the apartments were lighted with tallow candles, which were banished long since from all the genteel houses in London."<sup>2</sup>

It is true that no foreigner could come into contact with the British in the eighteenth century without observing their great eagerness to acquire wealth, but in the opinion of many of the German visitors the wise and beneficent use of the riches accumulated redeemed the commercial spirit of the people. Archenholz again speaks for a large element of his countrymen when he says:<sup>3</sup> "In all countries there are countless examples of a union between wealth and stupidity; in England, on the contrary, where money and honor are so often the fruits of talent and knowledge, the employment which the rich make of their treasures is ample proof that an alliance is possible also between bounty and common sense."

<sup>1</sup> *A Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pöllnitz, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 278, for a similar view regarding George II. Archenholz is writing here of George III.

<sup>3</sup> *Annalen der britischen Geschichte des Jahres 1788-96*, hrsg. von J. W. von Archenholz. 20 Vols. Braunschweig (Vol. I). Hamburg (Vol. II-XI). Tübingen (Vol. XII-XX). Vol. I, p. 298.

## CHAPTER IV

### ENGLISH CULTURE

The intellectual life of the English in the eighteenth century was on the whole scarcely less remarkable to the contemporary foreigner than their material progress. In literature, in philosophy and in the sciences, as in industry, England was recognized as a country of the greatest enlightenment, and many important intellectual currents of eighteenth century Germany may be traced directly to an English source. Not in all fields, however, were the achievements of British culture equally noteworthy. In the fine arts, for instance, England was not abreast of the other leading European countries; even her warmest admirers could not claim that she surpassed them in sculpture, painting and music. Wendeborn probably expresses the general opinion prevalent on the Continent, when he says of the English:<sup>1</sup> "It is admitted that, with compass and ruler at hand, they are good craftsmen, but no one will admit that they have taste and genius for the fine arts. They can calculate well, but their imaginative powers are said to be lifeless and their feelings for the artistically beautiful, extremely dull." Wendeborn, however, does not consider the outlook for art in England altogether black, for he adds: "There are now a few excellent masters of painting among the English, a few good engravers, architects and others who are a credit to the arts. The future may produce still more." To Volkmann the progress of England in the arts seemed very rapid: "It was scarcely fifty years ago," he observes,<sup>2</sup> "that the English raised themselves from mediocrity, but now they are hastening all the more rapidly toward perfection and are already overtaking other nations which formerly accused them of a total lack of artistic ability." England's chief contribution to the cause of art is held to

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, pp. 350-351.

<sup>2</sup> *Neueste Reisen durch England*. Vol. I, p. 101.

come not from the creative genius of her artists, but from the generosity of her men of means. Through the erection of public monuments to commemorate the deeds of her great men, through rewards offered by private citizens to stimulate artists to their best efforts, through collections of antiques, or at least copies of the classics, in all branches of art and finally through the encouragement and protection given to her own artists, England fulfills her artistic mission. In view of all this, Georg Forster declares that,<sup>1</sup> "in comparison with her contemporaries, England alone has done more for the advancement of painting and sculpture, more for the development of the artists themselves than all the rest of Europe together."

Various causes were given for England's backwardness in the arts. Winckelmann, observing that the warmest regions of Italy produced the greatest artists, inclined to the opinion that the climate was too cold for genius to thrive in England;<sup>2</sup> but this theory failed to satisfy the majority of his countrymen, and other explanations were sought. Eschenburg held the church largely responsible for England's failure to take her place beside Italy in the world of art.<sup>3</sup> "The Reformation of England coincided precisely with the most flourishing period of Italian art, and the sternness with which they resisted there [in England], more than in Teutonic countries, the representation in art of subjects from biblical history and legend, two such fruitful sources of the artist's material in Italy and France, this sternness and the prevailing opposition to all artistic decoration of churches, which continued long afterwards and received new strength from Puritanism, seems to have been one of the chief hindrances to artistic taste and its earlier dissemination in England." Wendeborn subscribes to the explanation of England's artistic sterility which, he states, is advanced by the English themselves; namely, that the national character of the people was already definitely moulded

<sup>1</sup> "Geschichte der Kunst in England." *Ansichten*, etc. *Sämmlische Schriften*. Vol. III, p. 484.

<sup>2</sup> *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*. Dresden, 1764. Part I, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Annalen der brittischen Geschichte des Jahres* (I) 1788-96. Vol. XI. Hamburg, 1795. p. 307.

before they began the cultivation of the fine arts.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Freedom, according to the same critic, is not the patroness of the arts and sciences. He points to Greece, Italy and France in order to prove that genius has been most productive during the periods of the greatest governmental tyranny and oppression. Freedom, he holds, is most favorable to trade and commerce and leads to the accumulation of great wealth, which blinds its possessor to the merits of the man of learning and talents.<sup>2</sup>

As the eighteenth century advanced, the German tourist in England found much to occupy his attention in the public and private art collections. Volkmann, whose chief object in visiting England in 1761 was to inspect these treasures, says in the introduction to his *Neueste Reisen durch England*.<sup>3</sup> "The English have collected at astonishing expense such treasures of art in this century that half Italy is now found transplanted, so to speak, into their country." But Wendeborn claims that very little general advantage was derived from the private collections.<sup>4</sup> "I have often had occasion to observe that in England the owners of such collections, on account of their avarice and selfishness, are not inclined to share them with others." This opinion is rather isolated, for the German visitor usually found ready access to the art collections, as well as to the manufacturing plants of England. Goede, for instance, is not in agreement with this last mentioned critic.<sup>5</sup> "A foreigner meets with no difficulty in seeing the art collections of the English, who in this respect are very obliging."

That England's attainments in sculpture were inferior to those in all other fields seems to be the consensus of German opinion. Pöllnitz has comments to this effect,<sup>6</sup> and Schütz, a much later visitor to England, found several monuments at

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand des Staats*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 352.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> p. ii.

<sup>4</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 360.

<sup>5</sup> *England, Wales, Irland und Schottland*. Vol. IV, p. 10. See also Volkmann: *Neueste Reisen*, etc. Vol. I, p. ii, ff.

<sup>6</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 267.

The eighteenth century German's impression of the Englishman as a devotee of music could hardly be better expressed than in the words of a modern writer, Fontane—and incidentally it is interesting to note that the German opinion on this point undergoes little change.<sup>1</sup> "Music, as everyone knows, is England's heel of Achilles. When one realizes with what musical monstrosities the English ear allows itself to be regaled from morning to night, one might well be inclined to deny the Englishman all sense of harmony. . . . However, it is not to be taken from the circumstance of the Englishman's lacking a musical ear that he does not delight in music; on the other hand, the old adage is again established that man cultivates most enthusiastically those talents with which the gods endowed him most sparingly."

For English architecture, likewise, the Germans had but scant praise. According to Forster, "most modern buildings in England sin, in their proportions, against all rules of architecture."<sup>2</sup> Here Moritz is almost alone with his favorable criticism. Upon his arrival in the first village he visited he was agreeably surprised at the<sup>3</sup> "extraordinary neatness in the structure of the houses, which are built of red brick and have flat roofs." Baron Bielfeld, who was delighted with the "elegant simplicity and more solid than glaring magnificence" of the interior of the English homes he visited, wrote to Baron von K—— in Berlin, as follows:<sup>4</sup> "The houses, even those inhabited by the nobility, have externally but a mean appearance, and the smoke of the coals gives them a black and disagreeable look." Büschel, too, gives an adverse criticism of English architecture:<sup>5</sup> "I do not like the structure of the houses; they are built of nothing but brick and, with the exception of a few of the greatest palaces, are not even painted."

But landscape gardening as found in eighteenth century

<sup>1</sup> *Ein Sommer in London. Aus England und Schottland.* Berlin, 1900—p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ansichten, etc.*, p. 413.

<sup>3</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen, etc.* p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters.* Vol. III, p. 61—London, Feb. 7, 1741.

<sup>5</sup> *Neue Reisen, etc.* p. 36.

England did strike German visitors as a fine art. Volkmann describes it as<sup>1</sup> "the art of converting every spot into a beautiful portrait of nature and of producing, on an elevated surface, if possible, such effects, by means of the relative location of shrubbery, lagoons, turf and buildings, that one is carried continually from one charming scene to another." Nor was it in Germany alone that English landscape gardening was highly esteemed; all over the Continent English taste in this field was regarded as the criterion, and full credit was given to England for the development of the art. Hirschfeld, the first German theorist on this subject,<sup>2</sup> says:<sup>3</sup> "The Briton was not only the first to attempt to formulate the true principles of horticulture in various writings, but he was also the first to make of them a successful application." Volkmann considers a visit to England essential to anyone who wishes to cultivate his taste in gardening, and Büschel is moved to exclaim:<sup>4</sup> "Who could find fault with this taste, which pays homage to the mother of us all and silently testifies to the perfection of her works; which subordinates to her the works of man and resorts to the latter only to intensify her beauties, which imitates her crudeness, her gradual adornment, her perfection, and confines all the endless *nuances* in which she appears throughout the world into a little spot, which seems to call to every new-comer: 'Approach with reverence; thou enterest the temple of a divinity!'"

That the owner of almost every German estate of any importance could boast, by the end of the eighteenth century, of an English garden, or at least of something that resembled one, is amply attested.<sup>5</sup> This particular symptom of anglomania met with considerable opposition in Germany. Hirschfeld, though enthusiastic in his commendation of the English garden, believed that the Germans, in horticulture as in everything else, should exercise their own originality: "When-

<sup>1</sup> *Neueste Reisen*, etc. Vol. I, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> See *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*. Vol. L. (Nachträge), p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> *Anmerkungen über die Landhäuser und die Gartenkunst*. Leipzig, 1773. p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc. p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> See *Der Neue teutsche Merkur*. 1797. Vol. 2 (July), p. 329.

ever parks were to be constructed of considerable size and at a certain expense," he states,<sup>1</sup> "British gardeners were called not only to France, but to Germany as well. Nothing was more natural than for them to reproduce on German soil the ideas they had followed, or had seen executed, in their native country. We received copies, not originals. Would it not have been better for us to consult native connoisseurs or to devise original plans for parks as the result of careful reflection and study than to follow the caprice of a foreign, often incapable gardener, who on receiving his wages invariably laughed at the stupid good nature of the German?"

Johann Georg Jacobi, discussing this subject at considerable length,<sup>2</sup> declares he would not have an English garden, even if he were a young man and could afford the necessary expense. The pavilions representing various styles of architecture from all parts of the world and the substitution of beeches, oaks and poplars for the more useful fruit trees are the features to which he objects most seriously. Besides, as the private property of wealthy individuals, he finds such gardens too lifeless; he misses in them the reaper binding his sheaves or carrying home his harvest with a song on his lips, and the weary traveler refreshing himself under the trees. Justus Moser, whose residence in England just after the close of the Seven Years' War played an important part in his intellectual development, satirizes in an interesting sketch<sup>3</sup> the mania for English gardens. The satire is in the form of a letter from *Anglomania Dom* to her grandmother and describes the transformation of an old German fruit and vegetable garden into a typical English park. The writer concludes his description of the new garden as follows: "Beyond the hedge, just where Grandma's laundry stood, a charming English garden is under construction, because my husband's name is *Netherich Dom*. I suppose he has this idea from the *Anglomania* of *Stowe*,<sup>4</sup> in which Lord Temple has built so many

<sup>1</sup> *Die Gartenkunst*. 5 Vols. Leipzig, 1779-1785. Vol. IV, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Die englischen Gärten*. (1807.) *Sämmtliche Werke*. 4 Vols. Vol. V, pp. 240-73.

<sup>3</sup> *Die englischen Gärten*. *Patriotische Phantasien*. (1778-86). *Sämmtliche Werke*. 12 Vols. Berlin, 1842-43. pt. II, p. 330.

<sup>4</sup> *Anglomania* or gardens in the English style; see Delille, J., *Les jardins anglais*. 3 Vols. Paris, 1824. Vol. VII, p. 160 and note, p. 186.

temples. . . . In short, your nice little garden, Grandma, now resembles an enchanted island, where one finds everything that he does not seek and nothing that he does seek." The grandmother is invited to visit the new garden, but she is urged to come soon, "for before winter we shall go to Scheveningen to see the English garden which Count von Bentink has constructed there on the sand dunes. . . . From Scheveningen we shall perhaps go to England and thence on to China in order to take a look at the great iron bridge, the nine-story porcelain tower and the famous wall, which my husband wishes to take as models for some structures in the rear, near the gooseberry bush, where your peppermint bed was." The old lady is advised to bring along some cabbage, as there is no room in the new garden for such things.

We have numerous ways of ascertaining the German opinion of English literature in the eighteenth century. Much may be learned from the extent to which English authors were read in Germany, both in the original and in translations, and still more from the influence which the leading German writers of the century, consciously and unconsciously, derived from England.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, we have definite statements regarding English literature from many Germans in the most varied walks of life, including the leading men of letters. Many volumes have been written about the English influence on German literature, and to go thoroughly into this subject is beyond the scope of the present study.<sup>2</sup> Every important English author and every considerable literary movement of England had an effect on the literature of eighteenth century

<sup>1</sup> The principal German men of letters who came under English influence through residence in England in the eighteenth were Haller, Hagedorn, Justus Möser, Johann Georg Hamann, Helfferich Peter Sturz, Lichtenberg, Archenholz and Karl Philipp Moritz. Another pronounced disciple of English culture was Georg Zimmermann, who for fifteen years was first physician to George III during the periods of the latter's residence in Hanover.

<sup>2</sup> For a brief, but very suggestive treatment of the subject see Max Koch: *Ueber die Beziehungen der englischen zur deutschen Literatur im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*. Leipzig, 1883. See also Introduction, p. xvi. In the present series the following works are to be mentioned here—Tombo: *Ossian in Germany*. Thayer: *Laurence Sterne in Germany*. Kind: *Edward Young in Germany*.



Germany. Beginning in 1713 with the *Vernünffter* of Mattheson in Hamburg, a "moral weekly" patterned after the *Spectator* of Addison and Steele, the English influence continued in an unbroken stream, though overshadowed till well past the middle of the century by that of the French, which had long dominated German letters. Adolf Bartels in his *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*<sup>1</sup> says: "That the Gallic spirit is not ours is recognized early enough, and so we soon begin to learn from the English as well as the French; at first, to be sure, only from such as have gone through the French school, from Pope, Gay and Prior, Addison and the somewhat independent 'descriptive' genius, Thomson. Then we become more closely acquainted with Milton, the important novelist Richardson and finally Shakespeare; the French school is replaced by the English." As early as 1721 the English influence began to make itself felt in Switzerland, again through the medium of a moral weekly, the *Discourse der Mahlern*, of which Bodmer and Breitinger were the editors. They soon came to be recognized as partisans of the English school against the French, which found its chief defendant in Gottsched, and the struggle between the two schools for supremacy in Germany was begun in earnest. Long before his death, which occurred in 1766, Gottsched had gone down in defeat, but it was not until later, through the activities of the Storm and Stress writers of the seventies, that the fetters of French literary tradition were finally broken and the cry for an "imitation of nature," which to its originators meant an imitation of the English, became the watchword of German literature.<sup>2</sup>

In 1719 *Robinson Crusoe* was translated into German, and so popular was the work that in the following year it went through five editions. Exactly a half century later we read in the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*<sup>3</sup> that "this well known book (the only one which Rousseau wanted to give his Emile,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Vols. Leipzig, 1901-02. Vol. I, p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> For a typical expression of the Storm and Stress anglomania at its worst, see Lenz' "Anmerkungen übers Theater." *Gesammelte Schriften*. 3 Vols. Berlin, 1828. Vol. II, p. 200, ff.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. IX (1769), pt. 2, p. 258.

and the prolific mother of so many German *Robinsons*) is continually reprinted; it must, accordingly, find readers." This was the forerunner of a steady stream of translations from the English, which grew to enormous proportions as the century advanced. One may take up at random any of the German book reviews of the eighteenth century and expect to find listed therein new translations of English works or new editions of such as had already attained popularity in Germany. Those received with the greatest enthusiasm were the novels of Richardson, Fielding, Sterne and Smollett. The critics are almost unanimous in their praise of the English novelists. Richardson is said to "spread over his characters such a delicate mixture of colors that their despicable traits never become repulsive and their pleasing ones are made so charming that the reader becomes passionately interested in them."<sup>1</sup> As for Fielding, we are told<sup>2</sup> that "few writers know the human heart, life and the ways of the world so well as he. Few are so penetrating in discovering humor wherever it is to be found and in portraying it with such effect. The characters which Fielding depicts are genuine Nature, and, we might almost say, Nature in all her variety. Together with these especial talents Fielding possessed that most valuable faculty of being able to draw simply and naturally the finest reflections and the most useful morals from the most ordinary situations." Sterne is given equal rank with Rabelais and Cervantes and is charged with only one serious fault, that of having founded a new literary sect, so numerous were his imitators in Germany;<sup>3</sup> and Smollett is recommended<sup>4</sup> "for all dyspeptic stomachs, dyspeptic spleens, dyspeptic brains; in short, for all diseases that can be cured by laughter." But in spite of their general popularity these English novelists sometimes impressed an eighteenth century German as they do most of us today; in the opinion of Baron Bielfeld,<sup>5</sup> for instance, "they understand the human heart perfectly well,

<sup>1</sup> A.d.B. Vol. IX (1769), pt. 2, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. VI (1768), pt. I, p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. XIX (1773), pt. 2, p. 579; Vol. XXXI (1777), pt. 2, p. 502.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. XI (1770), pt. 1, p. 336.

<sup>5</sup> *Letters*. Vol. IV, p. 149.

but anatomise it in too precise and diminutive a manner and disgust by their prolixity." According to the same critic,<sup>1</sup> "English romances are profound, unequal and sometimes tedious, as are many other of their writings in general and Shakespeare in particular; for the rest, they are sufficiently gloomy and give a severe and extravagant representation of the passions."

Many of the numerous German imitations of these English novels adhered so closely to their models that they were little more than a transplanting of foreign customs and manners to German soil. Lichtenberg makes such productions the object of his keenest satire. The difficulties of giving a German setting to an English romance he describes in part as follows:<sup>2</sup> "The harm done by the comfortable coaches and excellent roads in England can not be expressed in words. In the first place, if a girl elopes in London in the evening with her lover, she can be in France before her father wakes up, or in Scotland before he and his relatives decide what is to be done; therefore an author has no need of fairies or magicians or talismans to bring the lovers to safety. . . . In Germany, on the other hand, even if the father should remain ignorant of his daughter's flight until the third day, if he only knows that she took a stage coach, he can overtake her by horse at the third station." Of the seven varieties of style which Lichtenberg holds up to ridicule in his brief *Bittschrift der Wahnsinnigen*<sup>3</sup> three are direct results of the English influence. These he characterizes as Great Shakespearean Nonpareil, Checkered English Jack-pudding and Variegated Boaster, with and without Sterne (Gross Shakespearisch Nonpareille, Englisch geschachter Hanswurst, Bunter Prahler, mit und ohne Yorick).

The interest in English literature produced its most revolutionary effects on the German drama. The *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* of Lessing, who, in spite of his advance beyond all predecessors, did not completely break with the French

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> "Ueber den deutschen Roman," *Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, pp. 215-221.

<sup>3</sup> *Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, pp. 222-231.

influence, Herder's essay on Shakespeare in *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* and Goethe's youthful oration, *Zum Shakespeare's Tag*, constitute the early effective propaganda for Shakespeare and the English drama in Germany. But even before these familiar works appeared, the cause of English dramatic literature was not without its German exponents. In the *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freien Künste* of the year 1760 we find the following statement:<sup>1</sup> "We have already expressed more than once the wish that a good translator should venture to take up the English theater and make his countrymen familiar especially with the excellent old plays of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ottway and others. It would perhaps have been much more beneficial to the German theater, had it takes these as models instead of being carried away by French gallantry and enriching itself with numerous plays that are at the same time extremely wretched and entirely consistent with the rules." A similar view is expressed by a contributor to the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*<sup>2</sup> in a criticism of Christian Heinrich Schmid's *Englisches Theater*, a translation of English plays in five volumes, of which the first appeared in 1769: "It is true enough that we still have too few original works for the theatre, and in what other way is this want to be supplied than by borrowing from our neighbors? And upon whom can the choice fall better than upon the English, partly because they are more in accord with our taste and partly because, aside from this, of our contemporaries they have produced the most and the best dramatic works?" Schmid seems to have maintained a lifelong interest in the English style of drama. Thirty years after the above mentioned work appeared we find in the *Deutsche Monatsschrift*<sup>3</sup> an article from his pen on the *Literatur des bürgerlichen Trauerspiels* in which he gives a list of 229 "domestic tragedies" which had appeared in Germany up to that time, beginning in 1755 with *Miss Sara Sampson*. The

<sup>1</sup> From an exhaustive review of a work in three volumes entitled *Neue Probestücke der Englischen Schaubühne übersetzt von einem Liebhaber des guten Geschmacks*. Vol. VI (1760), pt. 1, pp. 60-74.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. XXIII (1774), pt. 2, p. 505.

<sup>3</sup> Berlin, 1790-94; Leipzig, 1795-99. 1798, Vol. III, p. 282.

titles of many of these plays indicate definitely that they have an English background, and all, of course, were written more or less under the English influence.

That the excessive enthusiasm of the Storm and Stress dramatists for Shakespeare was their undoing was clearly recognized by many of their German contemporaries. Baron Riesbeck, a German who, in his writings, assumes the character of a Frenchman, without deceiving any one but himself, had in mind such dramatists as Klinger, Lenz and Maler Müller when he wrote the following passage:<sup>1</sup> "Shakespeare, whom Goethe, probably from whim or with the view to draw the attention of his countrymen to that great poet, proposed as his example in his *Götz*, became instantly the idol of the German dramatic writers; but not that Shakespeare who, like Raphael, paints man as he is under every circumstance and expresses every movement of the muscles and nerves and every emotion of the passions; but he who, for want of sufficient acquaintance with originals and due to education,<sup>2</sup> gives himself up to his own wild whims, flies over ages and countries and worlds, and in the pursuit of his fluctuating objects does not trouble himself about either unity or order." Helfferich Peter Sturz, too, whose own writings show plainly the influence of his residence in England, warns against a blind imitation of the English dramatists, while he decries a servile adherence to the classical rules:<sup>3</sup> "Still less would it meet with my approval, if one should violate, as the English do, all rules of unity, traveling by land and sea on the stage and extending the action of a single piece over many years. It is not so difficult to find a middle ground between this audacity and the timidity of the Frenchman, who scarcely dares, on his stage, to leave the room." The interest in English literature was by no means confined to *belles-lettres*. English philosophers, philologists and historians were widely read in Germany, and their style, moulded as it was to a considerable

<sup>1</sup> *Travels through Germany*, translated from the German by Paul H. Maty. 3 Vols. London, 1787. Vol. I. p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Due to his defective education, is undoubtedly meant.

<sup>3</sup> Preface to his tragedy, *Julie*. *Schriften*. 2 Vols. in 1. Carlsruhe, 1784. Vol. I. p. 197.

extent by their thorough study of the Greek and Latin classics, had a far-reaching effect on German writers in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Eschenburg toward the close of the century wrote for the *Minerva* of Archenholz an interesting series of letters under the title of *Grundsätze eines Gemäldes der deutschen Literatur während der drei letzten Jahrhunderten*, in which he traces the influence of foreign literature and foreign literary critics on German style. In the fourth letter<sup>1</sup> he asserts that "the works of the Englishmen, Burke, Gerard, Webb, Beattie, Blair and others, eagerly read both in the original and in translations, have undoubtedly contributed far more to the development and strengthening of the critical literary taste of the Germans than the scanty and far less instructive modern works of the French."

Few subjects receive more attention from German writers on England, particularly toward the close of the eighteenth century, than the Englishman's opinion of German literature. Böttiger contributed to the *Teutscher Merkur* for September, 1797, an article on *Wie urtheilt das Ausland über deutsche Literatur*,<sup>2</sup> which begins with the following confession: "A peculiarity of our nation which has been frequently observed and criticised is the anxious looking about and listening to determine what foreign nations think of us." The Englishman's opinion of the German enters, as a matter of course, into the latter's estimate of the former; therefore it may be of interest to take up at this point the question raised by Böttiger and to see how he and his German contemporaries answered it. The situation is described in the above mentioned article as follows: "The Englishman forms his opinion of our literary products from a few romances of adventure and wild flights of the imagination which have been translated in London for some time by literary speculators. . . . Of our scientific and historical writings extremely few have been so fortunate as to penetrate the barriers which British self-complacency has erected."<sup>3</sup> Many articles on this subject

<sup>1</sup> *Minerva*. (Berlin, 1792; Hamburg, 1792-1810) August, 1795, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> p. 34, ff.

<sup>3</sup> J. S. Ersch answers Böttiger's article, in the *Merkur* for December, 1797 (pp. 225-235), maintaining that there is as much proof of an appreciation for German literature on the part of Frenchmen and Englishmen as of the contrary.

are to be found in *Wieland's Mirror*: from their frequency we may gather that its editor was somewhat sensitive on the subject of English indifference to German genius. In the issue of January 1771 we read the following protest against "the contempt" paid by the *London Magazine* to German literature: "The English may have good reason to be proud of their Bacon, their Milton, their Dryden and Pope, their Locke and Hume and especially of their great Newton, but surely they give no right to despise others: and it is no credit to them at all to imagine that the Germans, who produced the man who does the credit to their Newton<sup>3</sup> are spoken of in their country as a people of barbarians just awakened from the long sleep of ignorance and stupidity, who are beginning to stretch their eyes and ears, hands and feet, demeaning themselves at the same time as to give hopes that they will be able to resemble other human beings." As an indication of the extent to which German literature is known and appreciated in England *Mirror* notes the announcement by a London bookseller of a new work under the title, 'The Entertaining and Useful German circulating Library,' containing not only a selection of the classical English authors, but also a selection of famous French, Spanish and even German authors. As the volume draws near its close we find that the English public is "greatly encouraged over the prospect that their works are meeting in England. In a short time we shall be publishing in the *Mirror* for June, 1796,<sup>4</sup> a translation of a very important German literature has for some time been acquiring many followers and devotees among the English, and the translation of *Milton's Fast-tour through Hell* is now in its second edition of it has already been translated into French, and the tales of knights and ghosts are fully in vogue with the English taste and are eagerly translated into French. French books and grammars are in frequent demand, and the French language after a few years later<sup>5</sup> we are

<sup>3</sup> *Wieland's Mirror*, January 1771, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> *Wieland's Mirror*, June 1796, p. 17, 179.

told that "the words *German literature* are now heard at the tea table and in the most fashionable gatherings more often in one hour than formerly, perhaps, in years." Archenholz finds the most conclusive proof of the conversion of the English in the protest of their authors against the rage for German literature. "But this jealousy, this learned envy, this illiberal opposition," he assures us,<sup>1</sup> "is powerless and does not check in the least the continually growing interest of the British in the literature and language of the Germans."

A subject of frequent comment in connection with the reception of German literature in England is the opposition which it encounters from the more pious element of the nation. German plays, especially those of Kotzebue, which were extremely popular among the English, were declared by the orthodox and strait-laced critics to be highly immoral. For a German opinion of the Englishman's attitude in this matter let us turn again to the *Merkur*:<sup>2</sup> "The book-dealer, Bell, has just issued a prospectus in which he announces the appearance, from time to time of about forty German plays in English translations. The announcement contains a statement not very flattering to German taste, to the effect that everything will be omitted from these plays that might be considered immoral, and offensive to the refined English taste. The German brood of bears will accordingly first have to be licked by British tongues!"

The eighteenth century Englishman's ignorance of the German language explains in a large measure his unfamiliarity with German literature. It is only toward the end of the century that, Germans begin to observe an awakening interest in the study of their language in England. In the eighties Wendeborn writes:<sup>3</sup> "As yet my good native tongue is only slightly known at Oxford and Cambridge and—be it said not to the honor of the English—not highly esteemed." William Edward Mead in his *Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* gives an interesting discussion of the Englishman's ignorance of German. He says in part:<sup>4</sup> "With the rarest

<sup>1</sup> "Die deutsche Literatur in England." *Minerva*, October, 1800, p. 107, ff.

<sup>2</sup> April, 1799. "Brief aus London," p. 372.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand . . . in Grossbritannien*. Vol. IV, p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> p. 117.



exceptions, one of whom was Carteret, who had traveled widely in Germany, Englishmen in the eighteenth century were entirely ignorant of German. English tourists seldom knew more than a phrase or two of the language. Even a reading knowledge of German was a very rare accomplishment among Englishmen. Trained scholars like Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, and Parr were unable to use German books. Horace Walpole's acquaintance with German enabled him as late as 1788 to say no more than, 'I am told it is a fine language!' To Wendeborn is given credit for first awakening and disseminating in England an interest in the study of German.<sup>1</sup> This he did through the publication of two text books, *Elements of German Grammar* (1774) and *An Introduction to German Grammar* (1790). In the preface to the latter he states that there are already several German grammars in England, but he describes them as "very diffuse in etymology and very faulty in syntax." Nemnich is one of many Germans who comment on the increasing popularity of the German language in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century: "From time to time," he says,<sup>2</sup> "one meets Englishmen who really study the German language and derive some pleasure from it." In sharp contrast with this still luke-warm interest of the English in the German language stands the popularity of the English tongue in Germany, as attested—though undoubtedly in too extravagant terms—by Archenholz:<sup>3</sup> "In the circles of polite German society, among the belles, the gallants, in fact, with whole classes of the people, scholars, artists, merchants and soldiers, the English language is beginning to replace the French."

Education in eighteenth century England receives from Germans more adverse than favorable criticism. The Englishman's aversion to changes in the existing order of things, his blind adherence to tradition, was said to give to his educational system a sadly antiquated character; so much so that Goede considers the public schools and universities of England

<sup>1</sup> See Wendeborn: *Erinnerungen aus seinem Leben*. Hamburg, 1813. Intro. by C. D. Ebeling, p. IV.

<sup>2</sup> *Neueste Reise durch England*, etc., p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> *Annalen der brittischen Geschichte*. Vol. I, p. 347.

two centuries behind those of the other leading European countries.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, we find frequent mention of one great advantage of the English educational system; that is, the freedom which it allows for individual development along natural lines. Wendeborn sees a close resemblance between the Englishman's ideas of education and his taste in gardens and parks: "He loves nature, he comes to her aid again and again with a helpful hand, he will not allow art to destroy any of her works. This very trait is the cause of the Englishman's attaining most nearly to the real dignity and destiny of man."<sup>2</sup> Together with this fidelity to nature Wendeborn regards the uniformity of education among all classes as a benefit to the English nation, and to this same uniformity he attributes much that is peculiar in the national character. In elaboration of this point he says:<sup>3</sup> "That the inhabitants of this island esteem their form of government, their customs, their manners, their pleasures, so highly and look down on other nations with a reprehensible national pride often bordering on the ridiculous, is a result of their education and their schools. A native Englishman of rank who has received his education from childhood on in France, Germany or Switzerland will play the rôle of a foreigner, even against his wishes; in spite of his being British by birth, he will at least find himself less able to win the friendship and respect of his fellow countrymen, even if he escapes their positive contempt, than if—to put it paradoxically—he had followed the course of nature and become an Englishman through artificial means." Küttner is another of the numerous Germans with whom education in England finds favor on account of its conformity to nature:<sup>4</sup> "Education is, on the whole, much more liberal and unconstrained than in Germany; children are not held in check to such an extent by leading-strings, but are left more to their own resources; they are not admonished, scolded and punished so much, but are allowed rather to gain wisdom from their own unhappy experiences."

<sup>1</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. I, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> *Zustand, etc.* Vol. II, p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> *N. A. d. B.* Vol. XXIV (1796), pt. 1, p. 144.

As for the English universities, they were thought to be too much under the dominion of the Established Church. They afforded very thorough training in theology, but not in other fields of learning. To have the advantages of a good education in medicine no one thought of going to Oxford or Cambridge, but rather to Edinburgh or else to a foreign university, and the young Englishman who wished to learn his country's laws and earn fame in its courts of justice had to go to London to prepare himself for his profession. Wendeborn, who writes at length on the subject of education in England, is very severe in his exhaustive criticism of Oxford and Cambridge, as the following passage will indicate: <sup>1</sup> "Very few indeed learn anything thoroughly at these universities, and if they bring nothing with them from their preparatory school and do not study faithfully on their own account at college, they are very certain to return home entirely empty-minded. A prominent and learned man sent his grandson to Oxford and desired of him only that he should not forget in the first three years all that he had acquired at school." Furthermore, Wendeborn remarks: <sup>2</sup> "They are patterned in every respect after the old monasteries, and it is remarkable that a nation which considers itself so wise does not think of improvements, in order to do away with the useless features which every man of good sense recognizes in them [i.e., the universities], and to make of them useful institutions." Forster has similar objections: "The monastic order which prevails in the English universities has been praised in Germany as exemplary—because it is not known. The rules here are so strict that their observance is an impossibility." <sup>3</sup> The very stress which is laid upon religion, makes of it in Forster's opinion an empty form, or even a pernicious influence. "For my part," he states, "I can not understand how young men can escape the alternative of ~~idleness~~ or infidelity, when they are required here, during a ~~period~~ of six or eight years, to go to prayers in the chapel of ~~their college~~ four times a day. This *opus operatum*, of which

<sup>1</sup> *Sammlung etc.* Vol. IV, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> *Sammlung etc.* *Sämmtliche Schriften.* Vol. III, p. 430.

the good effects are shown by the initials carved on the benches a few steps from the altar in the chapel of Christ Church College, must produce a spiritual dulness, once it ever becomes a custom."

But in spite of these serious short-comings of English schools and particularly of the universities, eighteenth century Germans testify without a dissenting voice to the high state of learning in England and to the superior culture of the English people as a whole. Johann Georg Zimmermann, whose opinion on this subject has especial weight on account of his own attainments as a scientist, says that "any European nation not deprived of its senses, while perhaps claiming pre-eminence in learning for itself, will certainly not fail to give second place to England."<sup>1</sup> And again he tells us that in all the sciences and in almost all the arts the English are as great as is possible for mere men to be, and, furthermore, that their full consciousness of their own greatness is only too evident.<sup>2</sup> A still earlier expression of opinion concerning English scholarship which is of especial interest may be taken from the diary of Haller.<sup>3</sup> "In the sciences it seems that no country is more advanced at present than England, unless it be in jurisprudence; for the English have their own laws and do not concern themselves about those of the Romans. But in the investigation of nature, in scientific research and in everything that involves the art of measuring and the nature of substances [*die Messkunst und die Natur der Wesen*] they surpass all previous ages and all contemporary countries. The causes are: first, the wealth of the nation, a good government and the liberal rewards offered for scholarship; secondly, the reflecting and ambitious nature of this people, which carries all it undertakes, good or bad, to a high state of perfection; and, thirdly, the superior learning of English scholars." As further proof of the generous recognition given by Germans to English scholarship throughout the eighteenth century, let us take the following statement of Achenwall, written sixty years later

<sup>1</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> *Tagebücher*, etc., p. 132.

than the preceding:<sup>1</sup> "The Englishman is endowed by nature with traits that make for perfection in the sciences; profoundness and untiring energy are peculiar to him. No nation has produced greater intellects than the English, and none has done more to advance those sciences which are the greatest credit to the human mind and the most useful in ordinary life."

Taube emphasizes the excellence of English scholarship by a comparison of England's contributions to intellectual culture with those of France. In his opinion, "the light which is spread over the arts and sciences usually emanates from England. The errors which find their way into the same, come mostly from the French; not, it is true, on account of ignorance, but from superficiality and lack of thorough investigation."<sup>2</sup> In spite of the assertions of Wendeborn and numerous others to the contrary, Lichtenberg characterizes English scholars as independent and original, and in this respect he rates them higher than the scholars of his own country. This view he expresses in the following aphorisms:<sup>3</sup> "English geniuses go in advance of the fashions, and Germans trail behind.—The German scholar keeps his books open too long, and the Englishman closes them too soon. Each, however, has his place in the world."

The charge is often brought by Germans that the English scholar is lacking in versatility. They observe that he attains a high degree of proficiency in his chosen field of knowledge, but that he seldom reaches out beyond its boundaries in order to broaden his scholarship.<sup>4</sup> To refute this a German resident of London in a letter to the *Deutsches Museum*<sup>5</sup> dated November 8, 1779, writes as follows: "Any one who has come into contact with English scholars or who has even looked a little into their writings, will find this to be quite

<sup>1</sup> *Staatsverfassung der heutigen vornehmsten Europäischen Reiche*. (1790) Pt. I, p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> *Abschilderung der englischen Manufacturen*. Part I, p. 2, footnote.

<sup>3</sup> *Urtheile und Bemerkungen über den Charakter verschiedener Völker*. *Nachtrag*. *Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, pp. 121-122.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Volkmann's *Neueste Reisen*, Vol. I, p. 113 and Goede's *England*, etc., Vol. III, p. 86.

<sup>5</sup> 1780, Vol. I, pt. 2, p. 197.



false. There is hardly a tutor at either of the universities who does not understand Greek and Latin so well that he can explain the meaning and the beauties of the different authors to his students and who does not possess at the same time a knowledge of mathematics, not only geometry and a little algebra, but also astronomy and physics. . . . Besides, no educated Englishman is a stranger to the history of his own country, to its laws and its political constitution. Of modern languages he usually understands French and often Italian." The writer of this letter maintains that a country's culture can not be judged by the number of books it produces. By this standard, Germany would take first rank; but he reminds us that "there are countries where not a great deal is written, but where culture and refinement of manners are promoted through daily intercourse, through observation and through experience gained from many objects and many places."

The general interest taken by the English in literature, art and science and the homage paid to their great men in all fields of intellectual achievement are subjects which receive the frequent attention of eighteenth century German writers on England. Moritz is positive "that the English classical authors are read, without any comparison, more than the German, who are read only by scholars and, at the most, by the middle classes, while the national authors of the English are read by the people, as is indicated, among various ways, by the innumerable editions."<sup>1</sup> The *Deutsches Museum* for December 1784 contains an interesting article on *Englische und deutsche Literaturliebe*,<sup>2</sup> in which we read that Captain Cook's Journey around the World has just appeared in London in a handsome edition of 2000 copies, all of which were sold within two days at 4£ 14s. each. The assertion is made that no work could have met with anything like corresponding

<sup>1</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen in England*, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II, pt. 12, p. 532. This article is probably to be attributed to Heinrich Christian Boie, editor of the *Museum* and one of the leading exponents of English culture in eighteenth century Germany. This periodical is, in fact, more consistently pro-British than any of the others, not excepting *Archienholz's Annalen*.

success in Germany, even at a sixth of the above price. The question as to the cause of this difference between the two countries is answered as follows: "Not our poverty [is the cause], for that is taken into consideration. We are in reality not six times as poor as the British, as I have assumed, and then it must be remembered that we have thirty million people, while the British kingdom has only eleven million and that among us, consequently, in order to equal them, there would have to be three times as many friends of the muses. The only true explanation, accordingly, is our lack of interest in the sciences and literature,—our coldness and dulness for everything great and noble,—despite all boasts of enlightenment, our barbarity." Even Wendeborn is willing to allow the English some credit for the recognition they give to genius. He admits that, "generally speaking, the English public, in a certain manner, has cause to be proud of the fact that it rewards achievements in the arts and sciences more liberally than is customary among other nations."<sup>1</sup> Forster, too, draws a comparison between his own country and England, which is decidedly to the advantage of the latter. On the occasion of a visit to a tavern in Birmingham named in honor of Shakespeare, he exclaims:<sup>2</sup> "How admirably and advantageously is the general culture of the English shown by the homage they pay to the great men who have produced it. When will it occur to any one in Germany to give to a hotel the name of Lessing, Goethe, Schiller or Wieland?—This is by no means so insignificant a matter as might be supposed; it is in such things that the genius of a nation is manifested." Zimmerman is equally eulogistic in this regard:<sup>3</sup> "This people, often so ruthless under the pretext of freedom, forgets hatred, enmity, sects and factions, when the occasion is presented to reward great talents. The burial place of their kings is likewise the burial place of their geniuses. The remains of an actress, which in France are relegated to a carrion-pit, are here to rest in England beside the heads of the state. The honor which is shown in England to every great intellect has

<sup>1</sup> *Journal*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal*, etc., p. 398.

<sup>3</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, p. 265.

at all times prompted the ablest men of the kingdom to bind the scholar's palms around their coronets." It is this sentiment which is expressed so forcibly by Johann Jacob Engel in his eulogy of Lessing,<sup>1</sup> written shortly after the latter's death:

"Wenn er ein Teutscher nicht, wenn er ein Britte wäre,  
So schlosse seinen Sarg die Gruft der Könige ein,  
So würd' ein Volk, gefühlvoll für die Ehre,  
Ihm öffentlich ein ewig Denkmal weihen."

<sup>1</sup> See Archenholz: *A Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 142; also Erich Schmidt: *Lessing*. 2 Vols. Berlin, 1884. Vol. II, p. 773.



success in Germany, even at a sixth of the question as to the cause of this difference countries is answered as follows: "Not cause], for that is taken into consideration not six times as poor as the British, as then it must be remembered that we people, while the British kingdom has and that among us, consequently, in there would have to be three times mused. The only true explanation of interest in the sciences and literature, dulness for everything great and noble enlightenment, our barbarity." <sup>1</sup> to allow the English some credit to genius. He admits that, "ge public, in a certain manner, has that it rewards achievements liberally than is customary and too, draws a comparison between which is decidedly to the advantage on occasion of a visit to a tavern of Shakespeare, he exclaim tageously is the general civ homage they pay to the When will it occur to any the name of Lessing, G by no means so insignificant it is in such things that Zimmermann is equally often so ruthless under enmity, sects and factions reward great talents, wise the burial place actress, which in Frankfurt laid to rest in English honor which is shown

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I

<sup>2</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 3<sup>e</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*,

the eighteenth century man, always attentive, tried to make himself over-mindful of the cleanliness of dress he the man in England, careless in this respect the estimation of all this fact Moritz learned to discontinue his foot-ception his tramp-like licence of his manner of inns. Germans who with British life advised to give careful attention if possible, to provide with the demands of there was so peculiar as to be considered an inferior being of taunts and insults the course of our study, an excess of kindness in the latter, accordingly, his sojourn in England to the native style. gave to his dress was not cession his personal appearance shall find later on that praise of the beauty of the agreed that the English have physical characteristics

Goede undertakes to give a description of the national type:<sup>1</sup> "The physiognomies of both sexes in England are less charming than noble and distinguished. A handsome, open forehead, frank eyes which are less fiery than clear and gentle, a nobly shaped nose and even, regular features characterize both sexes. Those distorted physiognomies, those irregularly shaped faces, those sharp, deep-set features which are so often found among other peoples are very seldom seen in England. The complexion of the men is clear and ruddy; that of the women is very beautiful, their skin is delicate, transparent and of dazzling whiteness." When we read what Berckenmeyer has to say, we wonder if this fine complexion, even in the case of men, is altogether natural. *Britain*, according to his explanation,<sup>2</sup> comes from "the old word *brit*," which means colored or painted, and came to be applied to the country because its warriors were accustomed to paint their bodies with a certain herb in order to make themselves appear more terrible to their enemy; and this means of adornment the Englishman is said never to have discarded.

The German usually compliments the Englishman on his dress and personal appearance, but in this regard Pöllnitz is an exception. He declares that "there's not a people upon the earth that set themselves off so ill as the English do, and really they had need to be as well shap'd as they are for the generality, or their dress would be insupportable."<sup>3</sup> This is to be taken as a criticism of style rather than of carelessness in dress, for elsewhere<sup>4</sup> Pöllnitz tells us that in general everybody in England is well clad and that even the beggars do not make so ragged an appearance as they do elsewhere. Moritz, after a few days in London, writes:<sup>5</sup> "I have, in general, not seen such fine houses and streets as in Berlin, but everywhere handsomer people and more of them. It gives me genuine pleasure . . . to meet, almost exclusively, well dressed people of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, in the densest

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, pp. 260-261.

<sup>2</sup> *Neuvermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. V, p. 245.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 270.

<sup>5</sup> *Reisen eines Deutschen in England*, p. 16.

crowds and to see no street-vender without white linen and scarcely a beggar who does not at least wear a clean shirt beneath his ragged clothing." According to Goede,<sup>1</sup> the newly arrived foreigner was so struck with the clean, attractive dress of the people he saw in the streets of English towns that he involuntarily asked whether they were not adorned for some especial occasion, only to learn that he was viewing the usual, every-day scene. The frequent allusions to the cleanliness of the English people lead us to suspect that this virtue was not quite so common on the Continent as it might have been. We learn from the *Sittengemälde von London*,<sup>2</sup> to which reference has already been made (p. 35) that "cleanliness in the highest degree is everywhere prevalent among them [the English]. It is the rule in the dwellings, as well as in the clothing, especially the linen, of all, even of the lowest class." And Küttner tells us that, while the Englishman dresses with the greatest simplicity, his linen is of the finest quality and is always immaculate and that the materials of his clothing are the very best to be had.<sup>3</sup>

The uniformity of dress that prevailed was another feature that attracted the attention of German visitors. There was nothing in England to correspond to the picturesque costumes of the German peasants, nor was there the great difference in dress between the higher and lower classes that was to be seen on the Continent. In this connection Goede says:<sup>4</sup> "In England it will be impossible for the foreigner to distinguish the merchant from the lord and from the scholar; even the shop-keeper, even many workmen can mingle with the others without revealing their identity." On this point we also read in Wendeborn:<sup>5</sup> "In Germany the clothing of the common man, of the artisan and the man of means varies in quality. Of all this but little is found in England. The materials which are made for the common people and for poor people are not so abundant, and few there are who will wear them. . . .

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*. Vol. LXXVII (1803), pt. 1, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von Frankreich*, p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 262.

<sup>5</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 150.

Every one wants to wear fine clothes, and those who can not procure new garments buy discarded ones second hand, so that they may at least present a 'shabby genteel' appearance."

If we are to accept the German opinion, we must believe that no other nation in the eighteenth century was so much the slave of fashion as the English. This opinion seems to have become more prevalent toward the close of the century. Archenholz makes frequent mention of the Englishman's custom of adorning himself always according to the latest style; in 1785 he writes as follows:<sup>1</sup> "The English are unfortunately led away beyond all the other countries in Europe by the luxury of dress, which every day seems to increase. Twenty years ago gold and silver lace was not worn but at court and the theaters; persons elegantly attired always rode in carriages. . . . One now often meets with laced clothes; even the common people sometimes appear in embroidered vests. In general, however, the English still wear plain broad-cloth both in summer and winter, but it is of the finest kind: a common tradesman will use no other." In 1796, if we may trust this same authority,<sup>2</sup> one folly succeeded another in the world of fashion; in the winter, women's elbows were bare, but as summer approached the style required that the entire arm should be covered and that the lower part of the sleeve should be profusely adorned. In the *Göttingisches Historisches Magazin* of the year 1787<sup>3</sup> is found an interesting article on British customs, from which we take the following account of the fashions: "Despite the fact that bag-wigs [Haarbeutel] and French styles are seen only at court, the daily attire and adornment of the young Englishman or Irishman requires at least as much time as the most magnificent dress of state. The dandies, who carry on their flirtations in the most immaculate garb, put on in the morning fresh linen and an especial suit and have their hair carefully dressed. All this is repeated towards noon, and it may be easily imagined how

<sup>1</sup> *A Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Annalen*, etc. Vol. XIX, p. 343.

<sup>3</sup> *Göttingisches Historisches Magazin von E. Meiners und L. T. Spittler*, 8 Vols. Hanover, 1787-91. Vol. I, pt. 1, p. 157 (Letter from Ireland. Dec. 1786).

much time is lost in the preparation of the toilette and under the hands of the hairdresser." As to the absolute sway of fashion, Goede gives testimony:<sup>1</sup> "It is only in England that Fashion has subjugated all classes. Youth and Old Age do homage to her; she comprises all transitory external adornments, which she produces in ever changing forms, and reigns with equal power in the remote, as in the nearer parts of the kingdom. It is remarkable how quickly and how generally Fashion effects her transformations in England."

Every visitor to a foreign land finds many customs that are new and strange to him. This was particularly true in the case of Germans who visited England a century and a half ago. So striking were the peculiarities of the British people to Archenholz that he begins his *Picture of England* with the following observations: "The island of Great Britain is so different from all the other states of Europe in the form of its government, its laws, its customs, its manners and the mode of thinking and acting adopted by its inhabitants that it seems rather to belong to some other globe than that on which we live." Elsewhere Archenholz quotes from an old English song the lines, "The highest in the world has changed to the lowest, since my old hat was new," and he declares that this statement is more applicable to the British than to any other people:<sup>2</sup> "They breakfast at noon, have dinner in the evening and supper in the morning. Women apply themselves assiduously to the arts and sciences and gentlemen of polite society to the acquisition of a knowledge of ribbons, trimmings and perfumeries. Wealthy lords manage their own estates, keep their own accounts and ponder day and night over profitable investments for their money. Merchants keep fast horses for the races, dine in taverns at five guineas each and spend their nights at games of chance. Actors and actresses teach ladies and gentlemen of rank the rules of etiquette and good form, while other lords with their ladies vie with each other in shining at private theaters, where they play comedy for the amusement of the invited comedians."

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> *Annalen*, etc. Vol. V, p. 318.



English society struck the German as being extremely unconventional, for at home and likewise in France, where he frequently traveled, he was accustomed to a superabundance of social ceremony and was hampered in his intercourse with his fellows by innumerable fixed rules of etiquette. Like many of his other outstanding characteristics, the Englishman's neglect of ceremony was attributed to his spirit of freedom. He was said to be guided by the opinion that he need follow the dictates of good breeding only in so far as they did not conflict with his own convenience or his own inclinations. In consequence of this latitude—so Zimmermann discovers with surprise<sup>1</sup>—"it is no harm to throw one's self back in an elbow-chair when tired of sitting upright, and you may invite your friends to eat and drink with you at all hours and all seasons, whether to breakfast, dinner or supper, or whether you have roast or boiled meat to give them." Such a disregard of convention Pölnitz is inclined to consider a virtue, and in his comparison of the French with the English on this score the former appear at a disadvantage:<sup>2</sup> "It seems to me that the English are not the slaves of that tyrant custom, and choose to follow their genius and good sense. They don't surfeit themselves with those nothings which the French call politeness and which seem to be invented only to pass away the time. . . . To speak my mind plainly, if I were twenty years of age, I could like to become a complete Frenchman, but now that I am forty I am perfectly reconciled to the manners and customs of the English." Archenholz states<sup>3</sup> that "a traveler, more especially if he passes immediately from France to Great Britain, in looking for that politeness at once so splendid and so trifling which he has been used to, will not fail to imagine the English rude and uncultivated; and this, merely because he does not give himself the trouble to search beyond the surface of their character." Forster seems to have been such a traveler, despite the fact that he resided long in England and, as we have already learned, was in

<sup>1</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, p. 120. (The translation of Wilcocke, p. 118, is quoted here.)

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 288 (Whatley's translation).

<sup>3</sup> *A Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 52.

general quite an ardent admirer of English culture. He gives an account of society in London, from which we quote the following, not very flattering statements:<sup>1</sup> "Everywhere social intercourse is stiff and awkward. Before dinner people sit motionless in their chairs, have little to say, cross their arms and appear bored till dinner is announced. Then the women flock into the dining-room like cranes; nobody escorts them. Drinks are ordered as at a tavern, or small drinking parties are formed, and after dinner toasts are drunk. . . . Only in the West End are napkins in use; in the City they are never seen. Small dishes are found only in the aristocratic district; in the eastern part they eat all sorts of things from the same plate." Quite different is the view of English society given by Wendeborn. The German clergyman frequently voices his high regard for the Englishman as a social being, and the social life of London is altogether to his liking:<sup>2</sup> "There is just as much cheerfulness and good humor in English social gatherings as in those of any other nation. Yet to my great pleasure I have observed the absence here of that stiffness, that effort to appear clever, that spirit of contention which is so annoying in other countries. . . . The conversation of an Englishman is by no means so animated, so loud, so ingratiating as that of some other peoples, but to me it is the most pleasing of all. If it is true that an Englishman talks less, still, he often says more in ten words than others do in a hundred. If he assures me with a word and a clasp of the hand that he is my friend, I believe him on his single word more readily than on a hundred wretched, trivial compliments."

While the Englishman usually appeared, in the eyes of foreigners, to be of a serious, even of a melancholy temperament, he has always been known to be fond of all kinds of amusements and to enter into his play with the same enthusiasm that carries him to success in his work. Toze, whose statements—since he was never in England himself—may be taken as representing the general impression that was current

<sup>1</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 376.

<sup>2</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, pp. 284-285.

on the continent, attributes to the English a great fondness for diversions and entertainments of all kinds, including<sup>1</sup> "plays, operas, concerts, balls, masquerades, assemblies, routs, clubs and horse races."

Since the amusements of a nation are among those customs that undergo decided changes in the course of time, we must bear in mind that Pöllnitz is describing conditions as he found them in the early part of the century [1729-1733], when we read the following extract from his *Memoirs*:<sup>2</sup> "The nobility, the citizens and the lower rank of the people have, all, their recreations; and whereas in other countries the rich alone seem to have a right to pleasures, the English nation has diversions for all classes, and the mechanic, as well as his lordship, knows how to make himself merry when he has done his day's work. The English are very much for shows. Battles, especially, of what nature soever, are an agreeable amusement to them, and of these they have all kinds. Sometimes they engage bulls with other beasts, and at other times they have cock-fighting. . . . The battles of animals are not the only ones to be seen in England, there being very often combats of gladiators, when the wretches for pitiful lucre fight with one another at swords and very often wound each other cruelly. The English delight very much in this sort of prize-fighting; they shout loud applauses when either of the two wounds his antagonist. And when the battle is over, the two combatants shake hands and make each other a low bow to show they don't bear one another malice."

Some of the amusements of the English were attended with such cruelty as to shock the foreigner, who often received the impression that the nation was lacking in sympathetic feelings. Soon after his arrival in England in 1767 Wendeborn had occasion to revise his opinion of the Englishman on account of the horse races and bull fights which he witnessed in Northampton. Nor did a parliamentary election, characterized by "bribes, party spirit, drunkenness and fighting," find

<sup>1</sup> Toze, M. E. *The Present State of Europe*, translated from the German by Thos. Nugent. 3 Vols. London, 1770. Vol. II, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. V, p. 246, ff. (Whatley's translation).



greater favor with him. "All these things," he writes in his *Memoirs*,<sup>1</sup> "were very striking to me and my moral feelings were so often wounded by them that I was compelled to lower not a little the exalted conception of the Englishman's character which I had brought with me across the sea." Wendeborn points out many evident traces of old Roman and Saxon customs in the England of his day, and he declares that he is often astonished to find so many analogies between Roman and English history. "I only wish," he says in this connection,<sup>2</sup> "that I did not have to add that the character of the Romans under the triumvirates is quite applicable to the English of today. It has long since been observed that the English nation inherits its fondness for all kinds of spectacles from the Romans; and even if the present shows are free from the horrors which even the Roman woman could witness in cold blood, yet the days on which criminals are hanged at Tyburn are a sort of holiday for the London populace, and thousands of spectators of both sexes see a half dozen unhappy fellow-creatures deprived of existence by means of a rope, just as cheerfully as Roman citizens of all classes saw the gladiators break each other's necks in their combats."

Toward the end of the century we find frequent statements to the effect that the Englishman's ideas of enjoyment are undergoing a change. Boxing has taken the place of the gladiatorial combats described by Pöllnitz, but this sport itself appears none too civilized to German observers.<sup>3</sup> Küttner finds that the taste for horse-racing is by no means so strong as it once was, particularly among the higher classes,<sup>4</sup> and Archenholz states<sup>5</sup> that "the nation already begins to be less attached to hunting and to feel a greater passion for the fine arts and everything that can add to the pleasures of a sensuous life." The Englishman's enthusiasm for all kinds of games of chance, for speculation and wagers, was so great

<sup>1</sup> *Erinnerungen*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 249.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Jos. Albr. v. Ittner's *Schriften*. 3 Vols. Freiburg, 1827-28. Vol. II. "Boxerei," p. 321, ff.

<sup>4</sup> *J. & R.* Vol. CX (1792), pt. 1, p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> *History of England*. Vol. I, p. 127.

that in the eyes of our German friends, it amounted to a serious vice. According again to Archenholz,<sup>1</sup> "a love of what is singular and extraordinary occasions that spirit of gambling which is so general in England. . . . Such is the passion of the English for play that every dispute is generally decided by a bet."

No other form of diversion had a greater appeal for the eighteenth century Englishman than theater-going, and the theater was to foreign visitors one of the most interesting institutions of the country. "As to plays," writes Pöllnitz,<sup>2</sup> "the English are fond of 'em and have more of them than any other nation." In his praise of English theaters Archenholz is especially enthusiastic; in them he finds united<sup>3</sup> "all the efforts of art, the elegance of composition and the flights of the imagination." Wendeborn considers no place better than the theater for studying the national character:<sup>4</sup> "Aristocrats and plebeians are present, and the latter are bent on demonstrating that they consider themselves quite as good as the former. The upper gallery of the play-house, which the populace occupies, usually governs the entire house, and the actors must be guided largely by their commands and their humor."

It has already been stated that German comedies were frequently shocking to the Englishman's sense of propriety and were presented on the English stage only in carefully expurgated versions. In connection with this it is interesting to note that Germans could also find English plays shocking. This was the case with Forster:<sup>5</sup> "The character of the English combines good-nature, sentimentality, roughness and sensuousness. Hence there is in their plays so much excellence, ingenuousness, together with so much indecency. The French have more regard for the proprieties and say nothing in public which a lady of refinement might not repeat."

The behavior of the audience in English theaters must have

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 299.

<sup>3</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 160.

<sup>4</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 437.

<sup>5</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 363.

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of the English theater  
is no stage in the world

example, you have an impression that every actor has been expressly made for his part. Garrick is, however, the only one who can delineate every character with equal skill, from the philosopher down to the fool, from the king to the peasant, and who appears to put on a different face with each character." Elsewhere<sup>1</sup> Kielmansegge refers to the English stage as one "which has no superior in the world, and on which everything is produced with the highest degree of truth."

The praise given by German visitors to certain actors is very generous. Of this, as might be expected, the famous Shakespeare player, Garrick, receives the largest share. Lichtenberg's *Briefe aus England*<sup>2</sup> contain a lengthy and interesting discussion of the personality and art of this great genius, as well as of several other actors, including Mrs. Abington and the Barrys. The Germans who saw Garrick agreed that his acting was unsurpassed.<sup>3</sup> From the acting of Mrs. Siddons Hassel derived a new conception of dramatic art; he declared<sup>4</sup> that it was well worth a trip to England to see with what sublimity, nobility and delicacy this actress represented the emotions of joy and sorrow. In his praise of Kemble Forster is less extravagant, but the dignity of this actor and of English actors in general in serious rôles he finds very commendable. He gives an interesting explanation of the English actor's superiority in parts requiring dignity of bearing:<sup>5</sup> "This dignity, this loftiness in the rôles of kings and heroes I have never seen on the German stage, because here the action in such parts is not natural enough, or, perhaps, is too natural. I am inclined to believe that the familiarity of intercourse among people of all classes in England, and the nobility which is so apparent here in the culture and character even of the lowest classes—however much it is mixed with narrow-mindedness and ignorance of certain subjects—naturally ennoble the actor."

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> *Gedanken, Satiren, Fragmente*. 2 Vols. Jena, 1907. Vol. II, p. 72 ff. These letters were addressed to Boie and first appeared in the *Deutsches Museum* in 1776 and 1778.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Wendeborn: *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 456.

<sup>4</sup> N. A. d. B. (1793). Vol. II, pt. 2, p. 323.

<sup>5</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 365.

being written and played  
To Baron Bielfeld English  
English tragedy, as appears :  
I was at an English trag  
appeared to me quite extra  
seemed in my ears like  
still find their manner in  
comes me as at first; I someti  
an extraordinary power, w  
the piece, does not fail  
English comedy is my delight.  
plance of nature that is adn  
Fenbach is in hearty agre  
I must confess that they  
English represent in a very  
passions."

ably won the admiration  
ish home, and the family li  
short of ideal. One of the  
the establishment of a com  
gratifying did he find it, if l  
the country. Even in  
country seats were mu  
Germany, and in Engla  
drammen, obnoxious

but once he had entered an English home, his impressions were altogether more favorable. Büschel found the interior of the houses to be much neater and more attractive in England than in his own country. "In regard to the arrangement and decoration of the rooms," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "English women rival those of every other nation. The commonest handicraftsman has in addition to his work-room at least one room in which he receives strangers and in which nothing is to be seen that suggests his trade."

The home life of the English is strongly eulogized by Goede; he finds here one of the important points of England's superiority over France. "Travelers have often observed," he writes,<sup>2</sup> "that the English present their most attractive side in their domestic life and that they cultivate all family relations with great tenderness and noble artlessness. The English believe that they owe this advantage to the female sex, whose fine feeling, whose delicate sense of domesticity casts charm and serenity over their family life."

The mutual relations of parent and child were usually described as admirable. We have it on the rather doubtful authority of Berckenmeyer<sup>3</sup> that children had such great respect as to fall frequently upon their knees before their parents, and to beg of them every morning and every evening a blessing. The parents' side of the case is presented somewhat more reliably by Moritz:<sup>4</sup> "Even those of low rank seem to be very kind and indulgent toward their children and not to stifle their spirit by beating them and scolding them so much as is done among the populace in Germany. The children must learn very early to respect themselves, while in Germany the parents among the lower classes rear their children to the very same slavery under which they themselves groan." The foreigner observed that the relations in which parents and children lived showed more refinement than was usually the case in other countries. Although the children were very respectful, they were never seen to approach their parents in

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Reisen*, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> *Neuermehrter Curieuse Antiquarius*, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> *Reisen . . . in England*, p. 49.

... family life in general is looked on in  
... which embraces all earthly happiness  
... high regard for their children  
... the appearance of sentimentality.  
... Frenchman every other word is *heart*. In  
... only anatomists, clergymen and actors  
... heart: but the judgment of all who have  
... observe the English people for any length  
... the impulses of tender affection, intimate  
... gratitude penetrate the hearts of  
... and warmth that permeates the whole  
... control of the feelings is among English  
... feeling which they impart to their

... visit to an English home was all the  
... of a practice, later discontinued, which  
... enthusiasm:<sup>2</sup> "There's one custom  
... which, to be sure, you would not  
... time of a man's introduction to a  
... of the house with a kiss, which  
... 'tis a pleasure to see a colour come  
... as if they had committed a fault.'  
... of the eighteenth century  
... may be deduced from a letter  
... wrote from England in 1499  
... an Italian poet, urging

kind and gracious that you would prefer them to all your muses. Wherever you go you are received by all with kisses; when you take your leave, you are dismissed with kisses; you return, the kisses are repeated. They come to visit you, kisses again; they leave you, kisses all around. Should you meet each other anywhere, kisses in rich profusion; in short, wherever you go or stay, there's nothing but kisses."<sup>1</sup>

Regarding British hospitality there is no scarcity of German comment. That the English have always found it their chief delight to entertain their own friends and kinsmen, to keep open house to their own circle, is well known; but it is the reception which an outsider might expect at their hands that concerns us chiefly here. There is no doubt as to the general opinion on the Continent; it was that the English were none too hospitable toward foreigners. But the writings of the majority of the Germans who visited England and came into close contact with the English people undoubtedly tended to remove this impression from the minds of their countrymen.

Since Moritz seems to have fared worse than any of the others, we will let him speak first. He relates the difficulties he experienced at a number of inns, among them, one in the vicinity of Oxford:<sup>2</sup> "Finally I ordered a pitcher of beer, which I obtained for spot cash, but a piece of bread, for which I should likewise have been glad to pay, was refused me. Such an astonishing lack of hospitality I had certainly not expected at an English inn. But I wished to try everything possible, in order to see how far the incivility of these people would go. I requested, accordingly, that they allow me to sleep on a bench and give me shelter, offering to pay as much as for a bed, for I was so tired that I could not possibly go farther. But while I was still making this proposal, the door was slammed in my face." An anonymous German writer was not long in explaining the cause of Moritz' troubles.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Just when this custom died out has not been ascertained. As late as 1783, at any rate, Büschel (*Neue Reisen*, etc. p. 230) could speak of being "received and dismissed by a beautiful lady with a kiss" as quite the usual thing.

<sup>2</sup> *Reisen . . . in England*, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Anmerkungen und Erinnerungen über Herrn Prof. Moritzens Briefe aus England von einem Deutschen, der auch in England gewesen ist. Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*. 1785, Vol. I, No. 64, p. 267.



In the first place, he traveled on foot, which in itself was no recommendation, and then he was taken for a Dutchman or a Frenchman, and, therefore, a political enemy. No other Europeans were known to the ordinary Englishman, and not to one in ten would it occur that Moritz was of German nationality.

The other side of the case is presented by Büschel, whose purpose in his *Neue Reisen eines Deutschen nach und in England im Jahre 1783* was to correct and supplement some impressions given by Moritz. After a number of little excursions into the country near London, Büschel writes:<sup>1</sup> "Never shall I be able to praise enough the hospitality of the Englishmen, who entertained me, although I had only recently become acquainted with them, nor their kindness and attentiveness to me." Baron Bielfeld declares that the continental impression of English lack of hospitality is based on conditions prevailing only in London. "But go into the country," he advises his friend,<sup>2</sup> "and they will give you a reception that is equally polite and hearty; they will load you with civilities and favors, and on your departure will furnish you with letters of recommendation to their friends dispersed over all England; these will receive you equally well and will procure you new acquaintance. So that a stranger who is in any degree amiable, and known to be a man of character, may travel with infinite pleasure over all England; like a ball that is sent from one player to another." We can count on Archenholz to sing the praises of the English whenever possible; he does not fail them in this instance, for among many similar statements from his pen we read the following in his *Annalen der Britischen Geschichte*.<sup>3</sup> "The *émigrés* [who went to England after the French Revolution] gave to the English an opportunity to show their beneficence and hospitality. These unfortunate creatures come in swarms and, almost always, totally indigent. They were succored with praise-worthy zeal; on all sides subscriptions were started, to which private citizens contributed fifty, even a hundred pounds sterling. The old

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Reisen*, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*. Vol. IV, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. IX, p. 405.

national hatred, the difference in religion and beliefs was forgotten and only the misery of the exiles was considered."<sup>1</sup> On this point Forster gives an interesting discussion, from which we learn that the English prided themselves on their hospitality and called their country the most hospitable in the world, but that foreigners, on the other hand, held a different view, due, to some extent, at least, to a misunderstanding of the unfamiliar customs in London. Frequently it occurred that an Englishman, who had been showered with courtesies when traveling on the Continent, would discharge his obligations to his foreign host, when the latter visited England, by inviting him to dinner at a hotel, allowing the guest to pay for his own meal.<sup>2</sup> The Englishman's apparently perverted conception of hospitality struck Forster at first as absurd, but in the course of time he came to regard the matter in a different light, due, as he states,<sup>3</sup> to the following considerations: "In the first place, it is very literally true of the inhabitants in the country, at least, that they lavish hospitality on foreigners who are recommended to them. In the second place, it is more customary in London than elsewhere to dine at a hotel, since so many do not keep their own house there, but go, year in, year out, to a public inn for their meals. In the third place, many feel that they are allowing their guest more freedom when they take him to a table where he can order what he chooses. . . . Finally, even in London it is frequently the case that foreigners are entertained in the homes of their acquaintances. . . . But most important of all . . . is the condition represented by the saying, 'In England money will buy anything you want.' Beautiful hospitality! I said, when I heard this expression for the first time, and a thousand foreigners to one will be tempted to make the same exclamation. I am glad to confess

<sup>1</sup> That the hatred existing between the English people and the French refugees was very bitter despite these instances of generosity, is brought out in letters from London to the *Merkur*. See, for instance, the issues of this periodical for September, 1796 (p. 90), and November, 1796 (p. 319).

<sup>2</sup> Bielfeld, as well as Forster, writes of the Englishman's disinclination to return the hospitality of foreigners. See his *Letters*. Vol. IV, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 377, ff.

that I no longer hold in such slight regard this hospitality which secures to everyone in return for his money all that he can desire for his comfort and pleasure. It is not a small matter that the foreigner, the tourist, the customer who wishes to purchase something in a store, is received in a kind and obliging manner. And such attention is the general rule in England."<sup>1</sup>

A consideration of the hospitality accorded to the occasional German tourist in England brings us to the broader question of the Englishman's general attitude toward the foreigner and toward everything that had its origin outside of Great Britain. On this subject there is available an embarrassing wealth of material; and as British provincialism and blindness to the merits of other nations was to the German of the eighteenth century one of the most striking national traits, this aspect of the national character will be discussed at some length. That the British people were more provincial than their neighbors on the Continent is not open to doubt. At a time when travel was comparatively uncommon and the exchange of ideas was attended with serious difficulties, even in the case of nations which were disposed to familiarize themselves with the thoughts and achievements of other countries, the insular situation, in itself, of the British did much to develop and maintain among them the popular impression that they had nothing to learn from the foreigner and that their own civilization was in every respect superior

<sup>1</sup>From Fontane we get the impression that at one time foreigners were cordially received into English homes, but that after the middle of the nineteenth century a great change had taken place: "Old England's hospitality is now no more than a phrase, at best the exception. It lives in the old statutes, but has died in the hearts. The country is open, but the homes are closed. From time to time I receive letters in which the phrase *our English hospitable house* occurs in every other line; but the otherwise doubtful assurance of this hospitality is always accompanied by regrets that, for one reason or another, it is impossible at the time for the writer to entertain his friends. . . . The hospitality of Old England is dead, and he has double cause to regret it, who, like myself, in former years, has had the privilege of coming to know in its fullest bloom this charming trait in the national character of the English." (*Aus England und Schottland*. Berlin, 1900. p. 181.)

to that of other countries.<sup>1</sup> In this connection William Edward Mead writes in his *Grand Tour*:<sup>2</sup> "All in all, perhaps the most striking characteristic of the ordinary run of English travelers was their insularity and unreadiness to admit the excellence of anything that was unfamiliar. Even in our time the discriminating Walter Bagehot has observed that there is nothing that the average Englishman dreads so much as the pain of a new idea. This trait was far more marked a century and a half ago and appeared at every turn. The English carried their nationality everywhere with them; and their habits and standards were in sharp contrast with those of the Continent. . . . He [the Englishman] was forever vaunting the superiority of his native land and displaying his contempt for those who had the misfortune to be born elsewhere."

From almost any German who discussed at all fully the character and customs of the British we might obtain testimony to this effect, but we will hear from only a few. Volkmann, though a great admirer of the English, clearly recognized this shortcoming:<sup>3</sup> "A general trait in their character is their national pride, and thence it comes that not only on their extensive travels do they view with scorn other nations and whatever they encounter abroad, but they also manifest contempt toward foreigners who visit their country." While Count Kielmansegg enjoyed to the utmost his season in London society, he did not fail to note the slight recognition that a visitor from abroad received there:<sup>4</sup> "A foreigner has no rank at all in England, therefore at Court and on other festive occasions, where they dance according to rank, those

<sup>1</sup> Hagedorn, who visited England in 1729, recognized this British failing; he refers to it in the satirical poem "*Lob unserer Zeiten*" (*Poetische Werke*, 3 pts. in 3 Vols. Hamburg, 1769. Pt. III, p. 159), in which he states throughout precisely the opposite of what he means:

"Der Britte, der die Fremden schätzt,  
Will einem jeden sich verbinden;  
Der stille Franzmann übersetzt,  
Wir muntern Deutschen, wir erfinden."

<sup>2</sup> p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> *Neueste Reisen*. Vol. I, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Diary*, p. 283.

gentlemen who are not lords and baronets, and who wish to dance, are not called up until after all the lords, and just as the leader of the dance pleases." Goede in attributing the Englishman's lack of appreciation of other nations to his ignorance of them, is undoubtedly correct:<sup>1</sup> "Among no other European people, perhaps, the French excepted, is the knowledge of foreign countries so neglected as among the English. They are heard to express daily the strangest opinions of the rest of the world. Especially are they at a loss as to what they are to make of Germany." Klinger adds his testimony against England to that of his compatriots:<sup>2</sup> "The Englishman believes that nothing is beyond him, that he is entitled to everything [ihn kleide alles, er habe zu allem Recht]; he scorns what he does not possess and what is beyond his reach." And Wendeborn in his voluminous work on England finds frequent occasion to refer to the provincialism of the country, as, for instance, when he tells us<sup>3</sup> that "traveled Englishmen are very well acquainted with other countries, although even among them there are striking exceptions; but the masses of the people, even the better educated, usually know as little about the neighboring countries as about the interior of Africa." Elsewhere Wendeborn gives the following account of the treatment of foreigners in London:<sup>4</sup> "They are not only begrudged their good fortune, if they have it, and looked down upon with a jealous national pride, but the instances are frequent enough where they might reasonably complain of oppression. If the reception of Englishmen in foreign countries is compared with that of foreigners in London, who really render great services to England, a just and unbiased judge might, out of genuine pity, shrug his shoulders over British freedom, generosity and nobility of sentiment." What Zimmermann says of the Englishman's opinion of himself and of others is of such interest that it deserves to be quoted at length:<sup>5</sup> "The English themselves confess that they inherit

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> *Betrachtungen und Gedanken. Sämmlliche Werke.* Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1842. Vol. XI, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 118.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 244.

<sup>5</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, pp. 45-59.

from their ancestors an irrational prejudice against all nations under the sun. An Englishman who is engaged in a quarrel with a foreigner always begins by throwing his antagonist's native land up to him by means of some abusive nick-name. He will say, You are a French tattler, an Italian ape, a Dutch ox, a German hog. . . . All nations of Europe are despised by the sleek, pudding-eating, beer-drinking Englishman. The hunter in Yorkshire believes he is lord of the whole earth for in Yorkshire he is lord of all foxes." Furthermore in the Englishman's opinion "the Frenchman is polite, witty, cultured, proud, but at the same time a slave and a starveling, for his time, his purse, his arms belong not to him, but to his king. The Italian possesses no freedom, no ethics, no religion. The Spaniard is brave, God-fearing, very jealous of his honor, but poor and oppressed; and although he boasts that the sun never rises nor sets outside of Spanish territory, still, he will never be able to boast justly of his freedom, science, arts, manufacture, trade and commerce. The Portuguese is likewise a slave, ignorant and superstitious. The German is continually involved in war or in healing the wounds of war." In short, Zimmermann concludes, "all nations of the earth are found wanting when the Englishman weighs them in the balance with himself."

Of course the chief object of English antipathy was France. Haller comments<sup>1</sup> on how utterly Englishmen despise the French, and in this connection he expresses the belief that the achievements of the English would be much greater, were it not that their exalted opinion of their own land prevented them from seeing the merits of other countries. "No people on earth," according again to Zimmermann,<sup>2</sup> "despises and hates another people more than the English do the French; any foreigner, no matter what his nationality, who walks in London dressed otherwise than in English clothes, is always running the risk of getting smeared with mud on account of being taken for a Frenchman." It was observed by many Germans that the Englishman's hatred of the French became

<sup>1</sup> *Tagebücher seiner Reisen*, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, p. 177.



gradually less intense toward the end of the century, particularly after the Revolution. From Archenholz we have it that<sup>1</sup> "the English populace have in general the greatest hatred that can be imagined to the whole French nation. Of late years, however, this prejudice seems to be entirely vanished from the better sort, who now think the language of that finished people a necessary part of their children's education." And Küttner likewise notes a change in this attitude:<sup>2</sup> "The antipathy which formerly prevailed between French and English underwent a marked change even long before the Revolution; in the cultured classes and among the great it was never very pronounced. . . . The Frenchman has a certain respect for the English and the Englishman hates France, the country, as his rival, but is just as indifferent toward the Frenchman, the man, as toward the individuals of every other country."

While the above quotations undoubtedly represent the opinion of the majority of the Germans who came into contact with the English, we find at the same time frequent expression of a somewhat more favorable view of the Englishman's attitude toward the foreigner. Lichtenberg, who was received in England with unusual warmth, writes in his diary:<sup>3</sup> "Near Ingatestone we passed through a village where a fair was being held, and when the postillion stopped before a house, our coach was immediately surrounded by more than a hundred boys who enjoyed themselves at our expense, pointing out first one and then another of us and saying: *look, there is a bullock*. I hardly know how to put it, but there is a sort of good-natured coarseness among these people, which is very different from the coarseness of my native land, where the populace, to be sure, concerns itself about strangers less than in England; but when it once makes up its mind to take the trouble, there is no escape." And in a letter to Heyne Lichtenberg says of such mobs:<sup>4</sup> "I think a troop of

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von Frankreich*, pp. 252-253.

<sup>3</sup> *Bruchstücke aus dem Tagebuch von der Reise nach England. Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. III, p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> April 17, 1770—*Briefe*, Vol. I, p. 7.

malicious [German] students is much more dangerous than ten thousand of these people; against the former no sort of strategy is a protection, while an English suit of clothes and a little dissimulation renders everyone safe here." The opinion of Pöllnitz is still more favorable to the English in this regard:<sup>1</sup> "I don't think that the ministers of this country or the nobility are so haughty as they are represented in our country, and have reason to think that they who say the English are not civil to foreigners, have not been very conversant with 'em. 'Tis true, they are not so engaging as the French, but when a man is known among them, gives in to their ways and courts their favor, in short they are, methinks, as courteous and civil as any other people in the world." Another partisan of the English in this discussion is Taube,<sup>2</sup> who maintained that refugees from the Spanish Netherlands, France and Germany were hospitably received in England and that of all the other foreigners who went to England one half were vagrants, fortune-seekers and gamblers who were undesirable citizens at home, and most of the remaining half were artisans, factory hands and others whom need drove from their own country and who, through ignorance of the language and customs, fell into worse straits and frequently into evil ways in England. It would be a wonder, Taube holds, if such foreigners were not held in contempt.

On the occasion of his second visit to England, after an absence of more than ten years, Forster wrote:<sup>3</sup> "It seems to me that the ordinary man has become somewhat more polite in his speech and that he is more tolerant of foreign dress, foreign customs and languages, when he is confronted by them in the public streets. This improvement is undoubtedly a consequence of the general reading of newspapers in England<sup>4</sup> and a proof of the mildness of the real character of the English-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 286 (Here, again, the translator, Whatley, shows that he is no expert at his task).

<sup>2</sup> *Abschilderung der englischen Manufacturen*, etc. Pt. I, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ansichten*, p. 381.

<sup>4</sup> To the German visitor the great number of newspapers published and read in England was always striking. See, for instance, A. d. B., Vol. LXXI (1787), pt. 1, p. 7; Wendeborn's *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, pp. 114-116.



man, who, in the end, always gives an ear to reason, however loudly his prejudices, his evil tendencies and his passions at times argue against it." Even in these and all similar statements in defense of the English, however, we plainly perceive a recognition of their provincialism, their complacency and their lack of appreciation of other nations. Lichtenberg, for instance, acknowledges the presence of these traits when he repeats the frequent suggestion to foreign travelers in England that, in order to avoid unpleasant experiences, they should, in so far as possible, impersonate the Britisher, and Pöllnitz, when he states that foreigners must give in to the ways of the British and court their favor in order to make themselves welcome guests, simply admits the fact which he is attempting to deny.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BRITISH CHARACTER

In attempting to arrive at the German's conception of the Englishman as a type we are confronted with serious difficulties. Nearly all German writers who visited England, as well as many who did not, recorded their impressions of the national character. Some of these impressions assume the proportions of complete portraits, others are mere outlines; some, even from those who knew the Englishman in his own home, present little more than the general continental view, while others, as for instance, Wendeborn's,<sup>1</sup> are the outcome of close personal observation. It is difficult enough to form an accurate estimate of the character of an individual; to form even an approximately accurate estimate of the character of a nation is a still more difficult task. The eighteenth century German undoubtedly met with greater difficulty in his study of the British character than in that of any other European nationality; for in Great Britain men were not all made after one pattern to the same extent as in other countries. The political freedom which they enjoyed led to the development of a greater variety of types and made it possible for every one to leave off disguise and dissimulation and to appear as he really was. But despite these considerations it is believed that a careful examination of our sources will lead to a fairly definite conception of what the German thought of the Englishman as an individual. In this part of our study a certain amount of repetition seems unavoidable; for in the institutions and customs of the nation, which have already been considered, the character of the people is clearly reflected. It is hoped, however, that these repetitions will be welcomed as throwing additional light on German opinion of England and as bringing out all the more definitely the German conception of the English character.

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, pp. 234-316.

We shall first present a few of the more interesting general characterizations and then take up in some detail those traits which, in the eyes of German observers, most truly typified the English. For the sake of comparison let us hear an opinion of the sixteenth century from a certain Hentzner, who made the tour of England in 1598 as the traveling companion of a young German nobleman:<sup>1</sup> "The English are serious, like the Germans; lovers of shew, liking to be followed wherever they go by whole troops of servants. . . . They excel in dancing and music, for they are active and lively, though of a thicker make than the French. They cut their hair close on the middle of the head, letting it grow on either side; they are good sailors and better pirates, cunning, treacherous and thievish; . . . hawking is the general sport of the gentry; they are more polite in eating than the French, devouring less bread, but more meat, which they roast in perfection; they put a great deal of sugar in their drink; their beds are covered with tapestry, even those of farmers. . . . They are powerful in the field, successful against their enemies, impatient of anything like slavery; vastly fond of great noises that fill the ear, such as the firing of cannon, drums and the ringing of bells, so that it is common for a number of them that have got a glass in their heads to go up into some belfry and ring the bells for hours together for the sake of exercise. If they see a foreigner very well made, or particularly handsome, they will say, 'It is a pity he is not an Englishman.'" From the foregoing it is evident that certain dominant qualities of the eighteenth century Englishman were equally conspicuous two hundred years earlier.

For his *Curieuseur Antiquarius* Berckenmeyer claims no originality, but confesses in the preface that it is compiled in part from accredited writers and in part also from the observations made by some friends during their travels. As is clear from previous references to this work, its author was the veriest dilettante in his study of nationalities, but his statements are of some interest in that they present certain popular

<sup>1</sup> *Travels in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, translated (from the Latin) by Horace, late Earl of Oxford. London, 1797. p. 63.

conceptions current in Germany. Among his generalizations are the following:<sup>1</sup> In temperament the Frenchman is jocular, the German affable, the Italian grave and the Englishman moody; in counsel the Frenchman is quick, the German slow and serious, the Italian sagacious and the Englishman courageous; in enterprise the Frenchman is like an eagle, the German a bear, the Italian a fox, and the Englishman a lion; in service the Frenchman is faithful, the German easy-going [bequem], the Italian dutiful and the Englishman servile; in religion the Frenchman is zealous, the German fervent, the Italian given over to ceremony, and the Englishman devout. Three nations are said to be especially addicted to drink and feasting; of these Josephus Scaliger composed the following epigram: *Tres sunt convivae: Germanus, Flander et Anglus. Dic quis edat melius, quis meliusve bibat? Non comedis, Germane, bibis: tu non bibis, Angle, sed comedis: comedis, Flandre, bibisque bene.*<sup>2</sup>

From the early part of the century we do not possess many first-hand accounts of what the Germans thought of the English. Haller, to be sure, left a fragmentary diary of his trip to England in 1727, and Pöllnitz recorded rather fully the impressions he received there, presenting his view of English customs and national characteristics usually with reference to those of the French. In general, he concluded that<sup>3</sup> "Englishmen were much the same in their own country as the Frenchmen are outside of France, that is to say, haughty, scornful and such as think nothing good enough; and in like manner they are when abroad what the French are in their own country, good-natur'd, civil and affable." In 1741 Baron Bielfeld pointed out two impelling forces which he held accountable for everything the Englishman did:<sup>4</sup> "The English have a strong resemblance to the ancient

<sup>1</sup> *Neuermehrter Curieuse Antiquarius*, pp. 7-10.

<sup>2</sup> Frequent are the allusions to the Englishman's fondness for drink. "Certainly twice as much port wine is drunk yearly in England as is produced in Portugal," says Lichtenberg (*Allerhand. Vermischte Schriften*, Vol. II, p. 193). See also Moritz' *Reisen*, p. 117; Büschel's *Neue Reisen*, p. 210; Wendenborn's *Zustand*. Vol. II, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*, 1729-33. Vol. V, p. 244.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters*, Vol. IV, p. 70.

Romans. These cared for nothing but *bread and public shows*: and the English seem to have no other desires. It is to procure the necessaries and the comforts of an easy life that they urge their industry, that they pursue with so much ardour commerce and navigation, and that they nourish a little fund of avarice, which makes them fond of gaming of every kind. Even the arts and sciences are here cultivated only with a view to interest. The second capital object of an Englishman is the public shews; and these cannot be sufficiently varied and multiplied."

After the middle of the century we find that the German's interest in England led him to write exhaustively on all phases of English life, and we have, consequently, especially from the last third of the century, a large number of character-sketches which are more or less illuminating. These are important, of course, not only as representative of the individual German's conception of the English character, but also as influential in moulding public opinion in Germany. In a review of Toze's *Present State of Europe*<sup>1</sup> we read that the insight of this author into things British was particularly clear and accurate, as was established in part by the fact that Sir Thomas Nugent, the English translator of the work, found it unnecessary to make any changes or additions, when he came to the chapters on Great Britain. In the opinion of Toze<sup>2</sup> the English are "generous, benevolent, sincere, courageous, resolute and bold and consequently make excellent soldiers; which they have sufficiently shown in so many wars, both by sea and land. They must, however, be well clothed and fed, as living too plentifully at home to bear much hardship. They are extremely violent in their passions, and, particularly, their anger borders on rage. A kind of savageness frequently prevails in their manners, manifesting itself in the bloody fights and diversions among them, and in which particularly the commonalty take such delight." Of especial interest is Lichtenberg's estimate of the British character, for it bears the unmistakable stamp of originality and discern-

<sup>1</sup> A. d. B. Vol. XIII (1770), pt. II, p. 552.

<sup>2</sup> *Present State of Europe*. Vol. II, p. 204.

ment. In 1774 he came across the following statement from Hume: "The English of any people in the universe have the least of a national character, unless this very singularity may pass for such."<sup>1</sup> At that time he could not understand how such a man could make this statement, since its falsity was undoubtedly apparent to anyone in England. But the following year, after having spent sixteen weeks among the English people, Lichtenberg himself inclined toward Hume's view, without, however, accepting it absolutely. "If anything definite may be said as to the character of the English," he writes,<sup>2</sup> "it is this: that they are, as the saying goes, very high-strung. They distinguish many things where others perceive a single object and are easily carried away by the impulse of the moment. This explains how changeableness is a part of their genius. If they give themselves over deliberately to a single end, they must, in this way, accomplish a great deal." Absolutely opposed to Hume's opinion is that of Goede. He recognizes the fact that individuality is more marked in England than in other European countries, but, he maintains,<sup>3</sup> "it is quite as undeniable that certain prominent features which, as the result of the public life, form the foundation of every national character, are met with much more generally in the English nation than among any other peoples. This national peculiarity of the English is firmly established in their whole being and is not a superficial phenomenon of fashion or of passing fancy. While the German in all climes adapts himself to foreign customs and, with more complaisance than independence, assumes externally the frivolity of the French, the cold seriousness of the English and the phlegmatic pride of the Spanish, despite the fact that none of these qualities are natural to him, the Englishman, on the other hand, shows an unyielding inflexibility and would rather give up the most valuable treasures than a single trace of his national character." Elsewhere<sup>4</sup> Goede mentions as the three outstanding

<sup>1</sup> See Hume, David: *Philosophical Works*. Ed. by Green and Grose. 4 Vols. London, 1882. Vol. III, p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Urtheile und Bemerkungen. Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> *England*. Vol. I, p. 187.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 278.

faults of the Englishman his repelling coldness, his exaggerated national pride and an unjust hatred of foreigners. But of this writer's views we shall hear more later on.

A fairly typical character sketch is the following from the pen of Gottfried Achenwall:<sup>1</sup> "The Englishman has more in common with the Germans and northern European peoples than with the southern. But he is distinguished from all other nations in that he depends more on his own judgment than on that of others and discloses in his actions extreme impetuosity. He relies on his common sense and finds his supreme happiness in following his own head. He seldom takes the middle course, and often carries either his virtues or his vices to extremes. At times he is carried away by the violent emotions of his melancholic-choleric temperament. Hence comes the love for the unusual, the fondness for exaggeration, and the contradiction that his conduct sometimes seems to reveal. He is praised for his honesty, his generosity, his discretion, his lion's heart, his fearlessness of death and his love of freedom. Among the masses of the people we sometimes find furious passions, unbridled excesses in sensual pleasure, wildness in all sorts of diversions, scorn, coldness toward foreigners and an inclination to suicide."

In 1802 Joachim Heinrich Campe made a tour of England and France in order to study the customs and manners of the two countries. The following year he published in his *Neue Sammlung von Reisebeschreibungen*<sup>2</sup> an account of his travels which was welcomed in Germany because of its author's acute powers of observation. Campe admired the English for their general prosperity, their inventiveness, their untiring industry, their patriotism and their enthusiasm for every good cause, their vigorous, healthy appearance, their love of cleanliness, and the universal culture and healthful atmosphere of their life. But upon reaching Calais he experienced a feeling of pleasure "at finding himself suddenly among refined,

<sup>1</sup> *Staatsverfassung der heutigen vornehmsten Europäischen Reiche*. Pt. I, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> See N. A. d. B., Vol. LXXXV (1803), pt. I, p. 266, ff., for a full review of *Reise durch England und Frankreich, in Briefen an einen jungen Freund in Deutschland*, von J. H. Campe. Braunschweig, 1803.



polite, agreeable, sympathetic people after having seen in England so many cold, unsympathetic, gloomy faces, which looked down on every foreigner with proud contempt." This tourist commended the generosity of the English, as it was evidenced in the numerous public foundations and institutions of charity, and he noted to the credit of England that the prevailing means of acquiring and holding wealth there was through honesty and uprightness in all one's dealings. Like the majority of visitors from the Continent, however, Campe complained bitterly of the exorbitant charges that were imposed on him at every turn, and he took it to be the practice of the English to take advantage of foreigners in this way.

In their writings on England German authors employ the terms *national pride* and *love of freedom* on almost every page, and the mere frequency with which these attributes are mentioned indicate that they are regarded as the most striking features of the English character. Special themes of never-failing interest are the political liberty and the resulting democracy of the people, and here we find almost no difference of opinion, so general is the admiration for these features of the national life. Occasional references are made to certain dangers of democracy which are realized in England, such as a lack of due respect for constituted authority, but such shortcomings are considered insignificant when balanced against the advantages derived from the same source. Even the foreign visitor enjoys the privileges of English freedom, as is illustrated by the following lines from Kotzebue's *Indianer in England*:<sup>1</sup>

Kaberdar: Perhaps you take me or my daughter or my old friend Mussapery for contraband goods?

Tidewater: Good now, most venerable Sir, if you would not in all haste take it ill of me, I would say that it is almost the case: for we know not exactly who you are? What you are? Whence you are? Why you are? in short, you possess in a great degree all the qualities of a contraband commodity.

Kaberdar: Had I gone to Spain, I should have taken this speech, but in England I know my rights.—Pack off to the door!

<sup>1</sup> Act I, scene 19. These and all other quotations from the play are in the words of A. Thomson's translation, *The East Indian*. London, 1799.



Their freedom was usually pointed to as the chief advantage the English people enjoyed, and this advantage, it was held, was the cause of England's superiority in many respects over other nations. Archenholz attached such importance to this freedom that he regarded it as the sole source of the great difference between England and the other countries of Europe.<sup>1</sup> This view is supported by Goede:<sup>2</sup> "Midst the great storms which have devastated Europe the English nation has steadily maintained a state of prosperity unequaled by any other people. . . . The greatness, the glory and the happiness of this people is based on its freedom. This fact is attested by all the phenomena of its public and private life. Such a brilliant example of what freedom can accomplish is at the present time as instructive as it is heart-stirring."

For the consensus of intelligent opinion among Germans who had no opportunity of knowing the English people in their own home we may again refer to Toze:<sup>3</sup> "Their liberty shows itself not only in their behaviour, but likewise in their way of thinking, which shakes off prejudices and exerts itself to the great improvement of their understandings, in which they generally surpass the bulk of other people. Another good consequence of their liberty is that the great pay no servile homage to the court, nor the commonalty to their superiors; who likewise are not so haughty and impervious as in other countries; so that the difference between the high and low is not so conspicuous in England. Their love of freedom and the affluence in which they live likewise produce in them a warm love for their country: but, on the other hand, this very freedom and affluence is apt to fill them with pride, self-conceit and contempt for other nations." Moritz was deeply stirred by a contemplation of the effects of British democracy:<sup>4</sup> "When we see here how the commonest street-vender takes an interest in what is going on, how even the smallest children enter into the spirit of the nation, in short, how everyone shows his consciousness of being a man and an Englishman,

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> *England*, etc. Preface, p. xii.

<sup>3</sup> *Present State of Europe*. Vol. II, pp. 201-202.

<sup>4</sup> *Reisen . . . in England*, p. 38.

just as his king and his minister, our feelings are very different from those we experience when we see soldiers drilling in Berlin." And still greater is the enthusiasm of Zimmermann:<sup>1</sup> "The English owe the greater degree of liberty they enjoy above other nations to the superiority of their knowledge. Animated by a spirit of freedom, of which no adequate idea can be formed, even in most republics, they fasten upon the sciences as a tiger on its prey; they meditate on the great interests of nations and of mankind with the most daring expansion of thought: they are ever taken up with great objects and ever doing great things. Ignorance and error shrink from the penetrating vision of their genius; arbitrary power trembles before their vigorous investigation of its principles, while the authority of the law alone stands immovable and sacred. The greatest part of such nations as are free think and act but by halves; while, on the other hand, the English soar with a steady flight to the skies, because their wings are not clipped, neither are they called back by the lure of the falconer."<sup>2</sup>

In England more than in any other European country the individual stood alone; his position was determined largely by his own merits and was by no means so dependent on the accident of birth as it was elsewhere. As we shall see, pride appeared to the Germans to be one of the most apparent traits in the British character; but pride of family and of position was less general in England than in Germany, and

<sup>1</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, p. 266. Wilcocke's translation (p. 218) is quoted here.

<sup>2</sup> A comparison with the original discloses the fact that the translator added some peculiar flourishes to the already glowing tribute of Zimmermann, as, for instance, the tiger seizing its prey, the meditating with expansion of thought, the lure of the falconer:

"Die Engländer sind nur darum freier als andere Nationen, weil sie aufgeklärter sind. Mit diesem Geiste der Freiheit, wovon man in den meisten Republiken nur nicht einmal einen Begriff hat, werfen sich die Engländer auf die Wissenschaften, denken über die Angelegenheiten der Völker, sind immer mit grossen Gegenständen beschäftigt und thun immer grosse Sachen. Vor dem Uebermass ihrer Einsichten siehet man die Unwissenheit verschwinden, die von guten Gründen entblösste Gewalt erzittern, und die einzige Kraft der Gesetze unbeweglich stehen. Die meisten freien Nationen denken nur halb; da hingegen die Engländer sich bis zum Himmel geschwungen weil man ihnen die Flügel nicht abhaut."

this fact is frequently mentioned by German writers. Zimmermann, for instance, whose impressions of the British were formed chiefly in court circles, where democracy was put to the severest test, expresses the following view:<sup>1</sup> "In no [other] country is the individual so far dissociated from his birth, his rank and everything that is peculiar to him; in Germany the question is asked concerning a stranger, does he belong to the nobility; in Holland, has he money; but in England, what manner of man is he?" Kotzebue, likewise, recognizes the Englishman's comparative indifference toward pedigree in his *Indianer in England*.<sup>2</sup>

"Samuel: As for family, gracious Mamma, you know well that here in England we are not accustomed to think it of much importance.

Lady Smith: Alas no!—The carter and the lord enjoy here the very same rights."

Many individual instances of the feeling of equality existing among the English people are recorded by German tourists. Sophie de la Roche in her *Tagebuch einer Reise durch Holland und England*<sup>3</sup> relates the following incident: At the Covent Garden Theater a man in one of the most remote corners of the gallery in the middle of the performance shouted suddenly to an actor to stop. The actor obeyed, and there was a pause until another spectator, to whose presence the first objected, could be removed. Finally, the self-assertive Englishman arose again and shouted: *Go on!*, whereupon the actors resumed their parts. Not the slightest trace of impatience was shown by the king or any other important personages present, but all patiently awaited the conclusion of the interruption. In the opinion of a German reviewer of the above mentioned work,<sup>4</sup> such an incident affords a more accurate commentary on the spirit of a nation than whole volumes of learned discussions. Of similar import is the following observation of Küttner:<sup>5</sup> "At the horse races at Maidenhead I happened to

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> Act I, scene 1.

<sup>3</sup> (Offenbach, 1788.) See A. d. B. Vol. LXXXXV (1790), pt. I, p. 265 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>5</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von England*. N. A. d. B., Vol. II (1793), pt. 2, p. 611.

find myself standing in the same booth with the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. They were not better dressed than I, and they awakened in me new reflections on the difference which prevails between a prince of this country and a small German prince. Here he mingles with other people in everyday life and is distinguished from the rest only by his superior courtesy."

The Englishman's independence and self-reliance were regarded as admirable products of the personal liberty he enjoyed. "A rich Englishman," writes Archenholz,<sup>1</sup> "and in general every inhabitant of that fortunate island, knows no other restraint on his conduct than the laws and his own inclination. If he does not infringe on the jurisprudence of his country, he is entirely master of his own actions. From thence proceed those numerous follies and those extravagances at which the nations among whom they are unknown seem so much shocked, for want of being able to investigate the cause, which would make them rather astonished that they are not more numerous. *The opinion of the world*, so formidable in other countries, is there disregarded. Nobody consults anything but his own judgment; and they all despise the sentiments of those from whom they have nothing either to hope or to fear." These traits in the British national character are the subject of a strong eulogy in the *Neues Göttingisches Historisches Magazin* of the year 1792:<sup>2</sup> "The English have in general, despite the utmost refinement of life and the most exaggerated luxury, remained much closer to nature and much simpler in their manner of living than other peoples. They are more truly human beings than other cultivated nations. Each one is independent of every one else, and can be so without the slightest offence to his neighbor. The spirit of imitation is nowhere less in evidence than here. The commonest phrase, even from the lips of children, is: *Can't I judge for myself?* Their language is richer than any other in words that express self-analysis and voluntary action;

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> 3 Vols. Hanover, 1792-94. Vol. I, pt. 1, p. 194 (Letter from London, March 12, 1791).

and these words are current even among the lowest classes." In the general praise of freedom Wendeborn joins unreservedly. Unlike Archenholz, however, he does not see in public opinion a potential hindrance to personal liberty and something, therefore, which is properly disregarded, but an impartial court in which all questions relating to the interests of the citizens are decided.<sup>1</sup> "Here, heaven be praised, not only thoughts, but likewise tongue, pen and press are free. An Englishman has, consequently, no reason for being a hypocrite. He thinks, he speaks, just as he sees fit. . . . The entire public here is the great tribunal before which everything is brought for judgment. Every one is heard, every one is permitted to defend himself. If there were among all peoples such heralds, whose loud voices were capable of awakening shame and fear: if the common man were everywhere so eager to read the newspapers as here, insubordination, oppression and superstition would soon be banished by the majority of votes from many regions, and peoples who could read and who had the privilege of writing would soon cease to be slaves."

A still further national asset arising from the general participation of the people in all affairs of the state is the public spirit, which Archenholz describes<sup>2</sup> as "one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the English, . . . a virtue unknown in any other country, and which no other language than theirs is able to express. This passion consists in the active zeal of every individual to cooperate towards the general good; the very lowest of the people possess it in a very extraordinary degree."

As for the Englishman's love of country, we have already found it attested by Toze and other German authorities. No foreigner could have failed to observe the presence of this trait in the English character, but what the Englishman would have termed *patriotism* in his own make-up usually passed in the eyes of foreigners for *national pride*, and it is perhaps literally true that no other quality is so frequently mentioned

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 185—Also, A. d. B., Vol. LXXI (1787), pt. I, pp. 11-12, and *Annalen der br. Geschichte*. Vol. III, p. 202.

in describing the British as this same *Nationalstolz*. Moritz, however, sees that the English, besides this quality, also possess a commendable sort of patriotism:<sup>1</sup> "Here everybody, even to the lowliest, carries on his lips the name *native land*, a term used in Germany only by poets. *For my country I'll shed every drop of my blood!* says little Jacky in our house, a boy who is scarcely twelve years old. Love of country and military bravery are the burden of the ballads and folk-songs which are sung by women in the streets and sold for a few pennies." But the genuineness of this patriotism is questioned by Wendeborn:<sup>2</sup> "People who have a natural love of freedom and who will endure anything else rather than fetters . . . always oppose every force that might restrict their rights as human beings. Of such people, who are patriots from principle and from natural inclination, there are many in England, but they are a small number in comparison with the nation as a whole. There are also a great many who seek only their own advancement, using their feigned patriotism as a mask for their ambition."

Contact with the English did much to impress the Germans with a realization of their own comparative lack of patriotism. In the two words *patriam fugimus* Lichtenberg sums up the character of the German people,<sup>3</sup> and Zimmermann writes of them as follows:<sup>4</sup> "Single instances of a most absurd pride are evident enough at the German universities, in the German imperial cities, among the German nobility and in all phases of German life [bei allem was in Deutschland Herr und Hund ist]. But instances of foolish national pride are on the whole uncommonly rare among a people which scorns the works of its artists, receives the efforts of its poets with ridicule and praises above everything else exotic products and foreign scholarship." Especially in the latter part of the century do we find a considerable amount of propaganda from German men of letters with a view to developing greater love of coun-

<sup>1</sup> *Reisen . . . in England*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> *Urtheile und Bemerkungen. Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*. p. 8.



try. In the *Deutsches Museum* for May, 1776,<sup>1</sup> appears an essay, *Ueber den Vaterlandstolz* which, we may safely assume, was inspired largely by its author's veneration for England. Here we read an earnest appeal to the German public: "You are a German! Then, be proud of your Herman, of your hero Frederick, of Katharine, the benefactress of mankind! Hand down to posterity the names of Leibnitz, Klopstock, and Lessing! Name Germany's inventors, when England buries her actors beside kings and France places her interior decorators among the Forty! We are lacking in historians and orators, it is true, but not in poets and deeds. Still, let us be just and not forget that only thirty years ago Gottsched was still the German Addison, that even yet humor, wit and grace thrive only with difficulty on German soil and that *fatherland* and *freedom* in our language are little more than meaningless sounds."

In the imaginative literature we find additional proof that pride was regarded as a ruling passion of the British. Two English characters in the plays of Christian Felix Weisse confess themselves to be its victims; in *Amalia* Freeman mentions his pride as one of the causes of his downfall,<sup>2</sup> and in *Die Freundschaft auf der Probe*<sup>3</sup> Nelson is made to exclaim: "How my proud heart has deceived me!" From Schiller we hear much of this English characteristic. In *Kabale und Liebe* Ferdinand says to Lady Milford:<sup>4</sup> "Gird thyself with all the pride of thy native Britain—I, a German youth, will spurn thee!" and again,<sup>5</sup> "You call yourself an Englishwoman—pardon me, lady, I can hardly believe you.—The freeborn daughter of the freest people under heaven—a people too proud to imitate even *foreign virtues*—would surely never have sold herself to *foreign vices*!—It is not possible, lady, that you should be a native of Britain, unless indeed your heart be as much *below* as the sons of Britannia vaunt

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I, pt. 5, pp. 408-409.

<sup>2</sup> Act I, scene 4.

<sup>3</sup> Act I, scene 5.

<sup>4</sup> Act I, scene 7. Translation here and elsewhere from Schiller's *Works*, ed. by J. G. Fischer. 4 Vols. Philadelphia, no date. Vol. I, pp. 312-67.

<sup>5</sup> Act II, scene 3.

theirs to be *above* all others!" In the final words of Mary Stuart to her servants<sup>1</sup> there is likewise an allusion to English pride:

Und ist euch meine letzte Bitte werth,  
Bleibt nicht in England, dass der Britte nicht  
Sein stolzes Herz an eurem Unglück weide.

and again in Schiller's *Jungfrau* the Duke of Burgundy chafes against the pride of his temporary ally:<sup>2</sup>

Fern ist mein Sinn vom Frieden mit dem Dauphin,  
Doch die Verachtung und den Uebermuth  
Des stolzen Englands kann ich nicht ertragen.

Both Archenholz and Goede recognized the intensity of the Englishman's national pride, but they were both inclined to condone it as a legitimate and natural feeling. "This pride," writes Archenholz,<sup>3</sup> "is carried among them to a great length. Indeed, how is it possible to know and feel all the merit of such a system of liberty without attaching an uncommon value to it? This same sentiment with which we so violently reproach the English of the present times has always been felt by the most enlightened nations of the world. . . . This fault, if it is one, is still more common amongst the Spanish than them [the English]; but being founded on no solid grounds, it has become very justly a subject of ridicule. The English themselves are hated on this account, although their very enemies, at the bottom of their hearts, pay tribute to their extraordinary merit." Similarly Goede:<sup>4</sup> "Even if national pride is a fault, it seems almost unavoidable in the case of a people which, as the English, has attained to a dazzling height of power and culture and which lives cut off by its insular position from other nations."

The comparison drawn by Wendeborn between the pride of an Englishman and that of a German is of such interest that it is quoted at length:<sup>5</sup> "Love of country is common to

<sup>1</sup> Act V, scene 6.

<sup>2</sup> Act II, scene 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, pp. 49-50.

<sup>4</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. II, p. 280.

<sup>5</sup> *Zustand, etc.* Vol. II, pp. 251-53.



almost all peoples; among Europeans the English possess it perhaps in the highest and the Germans in the lowest degree. . . . But in vindication of the Englishman I must say that he esteems his person not so much on its own account as on account of his British birth. It is just the reverse with other peoples, especially with my fellow-countrymen, who usually think highly of themselves and their *ego* and air their personal pride, but concern themselves little about the glory which their native country might give them. A cultured Englishman speaks of his person, of his dignity and rank with modesty, of his native country with eulogy and a sort of enthusiasm: on the other hand a so-called fine gentleman in Germany is in love with his position and his title and seems only to be ashamed when he has to say he is a German. If my fellow-countrymen might only become better patriots!"

That self-conceit was a general failing of the British does not seem to have been the opinion of the majority of eighteenth century Germans. To the testimony of Wendeborn we may add that of Zimmermann:<sup>1</sup> "Englishmen are not vain, for they concern themselves but little about the opinion of others; even if honor is to them a motive of action, still, they are not governed in their actions by the judgment of others; enough if they are honorable in their own eyes, or at most in the eyes of their fellow-citizens." Nor does Archenholz show a conceited people when he writes:<sup>2</sup> "John Bull is a favorite subject for the satire of dramatic writers. The people are never more happy than when they see their own follies personified in this character; they are then sure to receive every sarcasm with the loudest applause."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vom Nationalstolze*, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> In the nineteenth century a change of opinion on this point is to be noted. In 1823 von Weech wrote: "A peculiarity of the Englishman, which is anything but creditable to him, is the over-estimation of his own worth and the low, often absurd opinion which he holds of everything that does not come from his own country." (*Reise über England . . . 1823-27*. 3 Vols. in 2. München, 1831. Vol. I, p. 79.) And Fontane writes with still more conviction of the Englishman's conceit: "The German lives in order to live, the Englishman lives in order to represent. In Germany he lives happily who lives comfortably, in England, he who is envied. The German lives for his own sake, the Englishman

The Britisher's pride was doubtless the main cause of his appearing, at least to a casual foreign observer, to be of a very unsociable nature.—“Every Englishman is an island,” writes Novalis.<sup>1</sup>—It seemed difficult to find the way to his heart; but once this difficulty was overcome, he proved to be a friend in whom no amount of confidence was misplaced. As Mead puts it,<sup>2</sup> “getting on easily with people that one chances to meet is an art that the French have carried to perfection. The Englishman of the eighteenth century commonly lacked the flexibility and the self-forgetfulness necessary for such casual intercourse, particularly if he had to use a language not his own and thus run the risk of making himself ridiculous.” To Küttner, one of his warmest German admirers, the Englishman appeared to be totally devoid of sociability; especially striking to him were the customs at the English inns.<sup>3</sup> Nowhere did he find *tables d'hôte*; guests seldom addressed one another and usually did not even so much as give each other a nod of recognition. Their first question upon entering an inn was, *Can I have a room to myself?* In short, they seemed to avoid carefully all intercourse with others and to entertain suspicions of all whom they met, or who attempted to converse with them.

Georg Forster had occasion to complain of the Englishman's coldness and indifference. In a letter to Heyne, his father-in-law, he writes:<sup>4</sup> “But the English are too reserved, too suspicious, too indifferent toward foreigners, or at least toward foreign endeavors, to be induced, in the brief period of my sojourn, to do anything for the promotion of my literary undertakings. So I must content myself with the very little I can snatch here and there, *ut canis e Nilo*, and which is little—in the selfish sense of the word, of course—for the sake of others. He has no desire to give them anything, but he craves praise, honor and admiration (*Eis Sommer in London. Aus England und Schottland.* Berlin, 1900. p. 209).

<sup>1</sup> *Schriften*. Ed. by Ernst Heilborn. 2 parts in 3 Vols. Berlin, 1901. Pt. 2, first half. *Fragmente* (1799), p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> *Grand Tour*. p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von England*, etc. A. d. B., Vol. CX (1792), pt. 1, p. 214.

<sup>4</sup> May 24, 1790. *J. G. Forster's Briefwechsel*, herausgegeben von Th. Z. geb. Z. 2 pts. Leipzig, 1829. Pt. II, p. 6.

enough." Two months later Forster was still more discouraged:<sup>1</sup> "From the sojourn in England I have derived less benefit than I had hoped, because I encountered everywhere too much reserve and coldness; and after a residence of twelve years in Germany I had become unaccustomed to this fatal trait in the British character. The only men who have received me kindly in England are Mr. Paradise, of London, and Dr. Silbthorpe, of Oxford."

This side of the Englishman is fully discussed by Goede,<sup>2</sup> who, on the whole, is less inclined than the majority of his fellow-countrymen to consider the English cold and unimpressible; yet he is fully aware of the fact that they do not possess all the social qualifications of the French: "Loud and almost universal are foreigners' complaints of a lack of sociability among the English. Certain it is that the foreigner always finds it difficult to form acquaintances among them, that the social life of the English is on the whole more restricted than that of other nations and that in no [other] country in the world do so many voluntarily live a life of seclusion as in England. How sharp is the contrast here between them and their neighbors, the French! The latter seem to live only for society." But certain similar charges meet with this writer's emphatic denial: "The English are frequently accused, especially by the French, of being cold and unsympathetic. Coldness is always a result of unadulterated egotism which, in its shriveled nature, prevents the admission of every liberal sensation. . . . It is inconceivable how such an accusation could apply to the English. Their daily works testify against it. Among what people is there stronger evidence of patriotism and public spirit? Where have the customs remained purer and simpler? What nation has in modern times looked after the alleviation of misery in all forms with such far-reaching generosity?" And so Goede concludes that the colder the exterior of the Englishman appears, the greater is his inward warmth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Heyne, July 13, 1790, *ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. II, pp. 279-87.

<sup>3</sup> An early nineteenth century tourist was inclined to attribute the Englishman's indifference toward strangers in part to his strong attachment to those

A profound admiration for British magnanimity, generosity and charity was evinced by numerous eighteenth century Germans. The presence of these traits in the British character was always recognized, and it was generally agreed that such virtues were cultivated to a higher degree in England than in any other country. This is stated by Büschel as an uncontested fact:<sup>1</sup> "Magnanimity and charity are pre-eminently English virtues. Of them no other country will be able to present such glorious monuments as England. Poverty and destitution have a sacred claim on the generosity of a rich man; he will never send away the helpless uncomfited. From youth up he has seen fulfilled in the most effective manner the duties of philanthropy; its doctrines are urgently commended to him, and he never loses sight of them."

Magnanimity is the outstanding quality of the most distinctively English character presented by Lessing. Sir William, the father of Sara Sampson, is ready from the beginning to forgive both his wayward daughter and Mellefont, her seducer. Of the former he says:<sup>2</sup> "It was the mistake of a tender girl, and her flight was the consequence of her penitence. Such transgressions are better than forced virtues—Yet I feel it, Waitwell, I feel it, even if these transgressions were real offences, even if they were the most reprehensible crimes; ah! I would still forgive her!" And even after his daughter has perished at the hands of Mellefont's former mistress, Sir William likewise pardons the man who has deprived him of all that he cherished on earth, declaring<sup>3</sup> that Mellefont was "more unfortunate than vicious." A further indication of Sir William's generosity is his treatment of Waitwell, his faithful old servant, to whom he says:<sup>4</sup> "From now on, my who made up his own circle: "Another cause of the lack of sociability toward foreigners is perhaps the great sociability of the English among themselves. And as there is never any lack of variety, especially in boundless London, they have little desire of acquaintances among foreigners, unless the latter are personages of eminent reputation or distinguished talents." (Von Weech's *Reise über England . . . 1823-27*. 3 Vols. in 2. München, 1831. Vol. I, p. 74.)

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc. p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Act I, scene 1.

<sup>3</sup> Act V, last scene.

<sup>4</sup> Act III, scene 3.

good Waitwell, you are no longer to consider yourself my servant. You have long since earned in my service the right to enjoy a decent old age, and I will assure it to you. I will remove all difference between us; in the other world, you very well know, there is no such difference."

An extreme instance of English generosity is presented in Kotzebue's *Indianer in England*:<sup>1</sup> Robert, the son of Sir John Smith, who had gone to the East Indies as captain of a vessel carrying a cargo valued at five thousand pounds, in hopes of retrieving the family fortune, returns empty-handed. Jack, who is boatswain of the vessel, gives an account of how this came about. They encountered a ship-wrecked vessel of which "the captain, a fine fellow of a Dutchman, had lost everything but his life and the honor of a sailor; and at home sat his young wife and three small children who had not a morsel to put into their mouths. Whenever he spoke of them, he pumped clear water from both his eyes. This my master could not stand. 'Comrade,' said he to him, 'I have neither wife nor child; here are five thousand pounds, take the purse and God bless you.'" To this the equally generous father says: "Did he so? then for that God will bless him; and I am glad that he has brought home nothing and will willingly divide with him my last morsel." The manifestations of generosity on the part of Englishmen in German literature are, in fact, so numerous as to leave no doubt that this was considered a common English virtue. As another example let us take the case of Lady Milford in *Kabale und Liebe*, whose generosity prompts her to sell a valuable casket of jewels, just presented her by the prince, in order to relieve the sufferings of four hundred destitute families whose village on the frontier had been destroyed by fire;<sup>2</sup> and upon taking flight from his duchy she writes to the prince:<sup>3</sup> "The happiness of your subjects was the condition of my love. For three years the deception has lasted. The veil at length falls from my eyes! I look with disgust on favors which are stained with the tears of your subjects—Bestow the love

<sup>1</sup> Act II, scene 9.

<sup>2</sup> Act II, scene 1.

<sup>3</sup> Act IV, scene 9.

which I can no longer accept upon your weeping country, and learn from a British princess compassion to your German people."

An analysis of the Britisher's philanthropy is attempted by Baron Bielfeld:<sup>1</sup> "Charity also forms a considerable part of the distinguishing character of an Englishman; but it has here a very different external appearance from what it has in France. We here see no hospitals where duchesses by the bedside of the sick give them their remedies on their knees. The care of this is here left to nurses, who are paid by the public, whose trade it is, who understand it better and whose presence does not lay any constraint on the poor patient. . . . The charity of the English is not theologic, but philosophic; it extends to those only who are incapable of labor and not to the encouragement of idleness. . . . A sturdy beggar[s] is but a bad trade in England. . . . The English count it a great charity also to aid those who strive to bear up against their misfortunes, or privately to assist such foreigners as may become embarrassed among them. They extend their benevolence even to prisoners, and consider it a disgrace to humanity to suffer them to perish in gloomy and noxious dungeons." Another tourist who praised the liberality of the English was Volkmann, who declared that the charitable institutions, even though often poorly managed, were so remarkable as to arouse the wonder and admiration of all visitors,<sup>2</sup> and a London correspondent to the *Neues Göttingisches Historisches Magazin* writes under date of March 12, 1791:<sup>3</sup> "Anyone who wishes to learn and admire the character and especially the philanthropy of the English, must visit the capital during this season of the year, for the numerous clubs and charitable societies which have been organized for a thousand different purposes, are now holding their annual banquets, in which everyone may take part who pays his guinea." In short, however biased and contradictory were the judgments on other points, it was generally conceded that

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*. Vol. IV, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Neueste Reisen*. Vol. I, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. I (1792), pt. I, p. 192.

the English was a philanthropic people; and no visitor seems to have taken greater delight in extolling this virtue than did Goede:<sup>1</sup> "In all fairness to other peoples it may be safely asserted that no European nation can compare with the English in the number and perfection of its charitable institutions. In most other countries the origin of the finest monuments of noble benevolence may be traced to ancient times, when a pious faith hoped to win the favor of Heaven by means of love and compassion; in England they date from the most recent times, are enlarged, extended and improved yearly and appear as the combined product of religion and patriotism. What tender attention does the unfortunate man receive here! The respect shown him causes him to forget his dependent position; it is not strangers who coldly extend him alms, it is friends who lift him up, who, by means of their sympathy, inspire in him confidence, courage and love of life; he finds himself no longer alone and abandoned in the world."

As to the general good-nature and kindness of the English, there is some difference of opinion, but the conclusion usually reached is that the absence of these traits is more apparent than real. Here Archenholz once more takes up their defense:<sup>2</sup> "It seems to me that no better proof need be alleged of the good nature of the English than their deportment on all public occasions. One is astonished to observe compassion, benevolence, generosity, and, in one word, all the social virtues, carried to a high degree of perfection, [even] among the very lowest people. If a stranger loses his way and happens to ask for any particular street or house, the first person whom he meets will point out his road and even accompany him, without the hope of any recompense: no one ever experienced a refusal." By a single instance which came under his observation Pöllnitz seeks to establish the kindliness of the populace.<sup>3</sup> He tells of an advocate of personal liberty who, in order to win more easily his wager that he could run around St. James' Park in so many minutes, removed all his clothing and started

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 303 (Whatley's translation).



on his race. "The ladies, astonished at such a sight, knew not how to keep their countenances, some turned their heads aside, others hid their faces with their fans, but they all made a row, as well as the men, to let him pass by. After he had finished his race, he gravely put on his clothes near Whitehall, where he had left them; and, as he had won the wager, abundance of people, instead of checking him for his insolence, threw him money. Judge by this if any people be so good-natured and happy as the English." A denial of British kindness we have already met with in some of the accounts of their public amusements and of their executions, which, by a certain element of the population, were looked on as a form of diversion. Bielfeld deplored these practices, but he did not on that account accuse the Englishman of inherent cruelty:<sup>1</sup> "All that I find reprehensible in the general character of the English . . . is a certain insensibility, which in the common people sometimes proceeds to ferocity, and which even reigns in their very pleasures, such as the murdering chase, the baiting of bulls and other animals, their races, in which both men and horses sometimes perish, the brutal combats between the men themselves, and other things of the same kind. The English not only see all these barbarities without emotion, but even pay for the pleasure of seeing them. I am inclined to think that their climate, their method of living, especially among the marine, wrong education, either physical or moral, must have given this insensibility to the English and that the fault does not lay in their hearts." That the British were at least as humane as other peoples was the belief of Pöllnitz:<sup>2</sup> "The English are run down for their cruelty, but I know not for what reason, unless it be that in battle they do not readily give quarter and are apt to pursue their advantage too far. I fancy it would be easy to prove that other nations who charge the English with this vice are more cruel than they. For in short the barbarities committed in the conquest of Mexico, the burning of the Palatinate, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Sicilian Vespers, the

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*. Vol. IV, p. 206 (Hooper's translation).

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 289.



assassinations of the best of kings, are cruelties that are not to be matched in the history of England. We don't hear of those assassinations in this country that are committed elsewhere, and even the highwaymen seem to be more humane here than abroad; for they generally content themselves with what is given them without shedding of blood, and some of them are so generous as to give money to people whom other highwaymen have stripped."

If we may judge by the absolute lack of dissenting opinion, honesty and frankness were among the Britisher's most prominent characteristics. So marked was his frankness, in fact, that it often won for him the reputation of rudeness and incivility, but these qualities, like his apparent lack of sociability, although in frequent evidence on the surface, were not a real element of his nature, and all foreigners who were able to overlook such superficialities came to admire him for his probity and fair-dealing. "The English look on hypocrisy," observes Archenholz,<sup>1</sup> "as the most despicable of all vices; and from this proceeds that boldness of speech, which, if not softened a little by the choice of expressions, would pass for rudeness." And in the simple fact that they entertained a deep-seated hatred of the word *liar* Moritz saw an admirable trait in their character.<sup>2</sup>

A forceful example of the British sense of honor and integrity is presented by Klinger—no lover of the British—in his play *Elfride*. Edgar, King of England, has heard of the beauty of Elfride, but has never seen her. He sends Ethelwold, his trusted friend to confirm these rumors and, if they should prove true, to ask Elfride to share with him his throne. But Ethelwold himself falls in love with the fair Elfride. In order to leave open the way to his own happiness he reports to the king that she is not worthy of becoming Queen of England. Ethelwold and Elfride are married. A year and a half later they receive a visit from the king. The deception is apparent. Ethelwold's remorse over having violated his honor knows no bounds. Edgar rebukes him.<sup>3</sup> "You know me and

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Klinger . . . in England*, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Act V, scene 2.

are aware that I consider confidence in a friend and candor man's chief adornment." And Ethelwold answers: "Your just accusations are more painful to me than my near death. I await it without shrinking and conceal what my heart feels at this terrible moment." In Schiller's character of Paulet, the guardian of Mary Stuart, we see British integrity admirably portrayed. And even Burleigh, who tries to make Paulet forget for a time his sense of honor, is still a man of probity, though with him this virtue is overshadowed by subtle, ruthless diplomacy:<sup>1</sup>

Burleigh. Man breitet aus, sie schwinde, lässt sie kränker  
Und kränker werden, endlich still verschneiden;  
So stirbt sie in der Menschen Angedenken—  
Und euer Ruf bleibt rein.

Paulet. Nicht mein Gewissen.

Burleigh. Wenn ihr die eigene Hand nicht leihen wollt,  
So werdet ihr der fremden doch nicht wehren.

Paulet. Kein Mörder soll sich ihrer Schwelle nahn,  
So lang die Götter meines Dachs sie schützen.

From Bielfeld<sup>2</sup> we learn that a "particular quality of the English is that candor and that frankness of behaviour which is the consequence. They think too justly to wish to deceive their brethren by false appearances, by those vain compliments which flatter little minds and which at the same time are so well known to be false, and to which we give the fine name of politeness. We must not imagine, however, that rusticity predominates in England, and least of all among those whose title, birth or fortune have given them the advantage of a liberal education. . . . On the contrary, I find much true politeness, much attention and a strong desire to please." Especially pronounced is Volkmann's enthusiasm:<sup>3</sup> "Honesty is also a characteristic of the greatest part of the nation; the Englishman is a man of his word. It is true that many may be found at court, in the judgment chambers and at the stock exchange who do not always ask the advice of their

<sup>1</sup> *Maria Stuart*. Act II, scene 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*. Vol. IV, p. 201.

<sup>3</sup> *Neueste Reisen*, etc. Vol. I, p. 31.

conscience; but, generally speaking, the English merchant is honest, and the Englishman honorable, so that we may entrust ourselves to him under trying circumstances more readily than to a man of another nation." Particularly convincing is the testimony of Wendeborn on this point on account of the conservatism which usually marks his praise of the English:<sup>1</sup> "Honesty and a candid disposition are attributed to the character of the Englishman. To this my experience leads me to agree. Few assertions are so general as not to be subject to exceptions, and scoundrels and calculating [zurückhaltend] imposters are to be found here as well as in other countries, but on the whole the nation can justly claim for itself the glory of honesty. . . . There are here, as I have already said, hypocrites, impostors, misers, deceivers, as elsewhere, but the rank and file of the people are honorable and honest, and, with all due regard for other nations, if I had to entrust myself, under dangerous or trying circumstances, to a stranger, I would give the preference to the Englishman."

The Britisher's sense of honor as shown in his faithfulness to a promise of any nature whatever won the admiration of Kielmansegge, who observes in connection with the prize-fights so popular in England, that<sup>2</sup> "there is not the slightest doubt that the bets are duly paid, although frequently the parties do not know one another, or have seldom seen one another." And Archenholz eulogizes the honesty even of the notorious London thieves:<sup>3</sup> "Nothing is more astonishing than the fidelity, I may even say the probity of these wretches in regard to one another: this appears in the mutual dangers that they run, the fair division that they make of the spoil, and, in fine, is perceptible through their whole behaviour. This phenomenon fully justifies the English proverb that 'there is honor among thieves.'"

Despite the Englishman's reverence for tradition and the established order of things—a quality in his make-up to which many German writers refer—he was always on the lookout for something new and unusual, and his readiness to accept a

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Diary*, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 86.

new idea often amounted to gullibility. The good effects of this quality were recognized by Archenholz:<sup>1</sup> "The Briton, in Parliament as well as at the tavern, says with regard to doubtful questions, *I am open to conviction*, and if this conviction follows, he readily admits it. I hope that this virtue, so worthy of imitation, may one day characterize the German nation." Elsewhere Archenholz calls this same open-mindedness by a different name:<sup>2</sup> "It is remarked that no [other] nation is so credulous as the English;" and again,<sup>3</sup> "Although the people are daily instructed by frequent examples, they are still disposed to believe every impostor."

The latter half of the eighteenth century was, in fact, the golden age of impostors and swindlers of all kinds, and nowhere did they find a more favorable field for their activities than in the city of London. In describing the Englishman as credulous German writers were, accordingly, simply adding their testimony to an otherwise well established fact. In his essay on the arch-swindler of the century, Cagliostro, Carlyle says of this period:<sup>4</sup> "It was the very age of impostors, cut-purses, swindlers, double-gaugers, enthusiasts, ambiguous persons; quacks simple, quacks compound, crack-brained, or with deceit prepense; quacks and quackeries of all colors and kinds. How many Mesmerists, Magicians, Cabalists, Swedenborgians, Illuminati, Crucified Nuns, and Devils of London! To which the Inquisition Biographer adds Vampires, Sylphs, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and an Et cetera. Consider your Schröppers, Cagliostros, Casanovas, Saint-Germains, Dr. Grahams; the Chevalier d'Em, Psalmanazer, Abbé Paris and the Ghost of Cock Lane! As if Bedlam had broken loose; as if rather (in that spiritual Twelfth-hour of the night) the everlasting pit had opened itself, and from its still blacker bosom had issued Madness and all manner of shapeless Misbirths, to masquerade and chatter there." From Büschel we hear something of the success of all these impostors:<sup>5</sup> "That these

<sup>1</sup> *Minerva*. Vol. VII, p. 522. Sept. 1793.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*. Boston, 1859. p. 435 (First appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1833).

<sup>5</sup> *Neue Reisen*, p. 114.

gentlemen [Dr. Graham and Katerfelto] and all their brethren have a great following and dispose of their wares to advantage I can testify from my own observation; and the fact is all the less questionable when we take into account a prominent element in the nature of the English—their curiosity, which is apparent in all walks of life, among all classes of the people. Since this weakness is generally recognized, is it surprising that there are people who take advantage of it in order to enrich themselves? . . . For an adventurous brain nothing is easier than to lead all London by the nose by means of some simple mechanical toy, and such deceptions have been of frequent occurrence.”<sup>1</sup> Twenty years later the situation showed no marked improvement.<sup>2</sup> “Superstition appears in England in all forms in which it is seen in other countries; fortune-tellers, treasure seekers [Schatzgräber], astrologists and visionaries are perhaps quite as numerous here as in any other country of Europe. Sympathetic healing is practised, children wear amulets, and every possible precaution is taken against witchcraft.”

Concerning the Englishman's credulity many anecdotes were told. The following, from Wendeborn,<sup>3</sup> is typical: “A few years ago a wag announced in the newspapers on the last day of March that one of the strangest processions would be seen the following day at noon moving toward Westminster Abbey. The announcement itself bore the marks of fabrication. Nevertheless, a large crowd assembled near the Abbey; in fact, many were to be seen waiting in carriages, until someone loudly cried: *Today is April the first!*”

His reflection for the novel was doubtless responsible in part for the Englishman's belief in improbable things. According to Kättner,<sup>4</sup> this feeling was so strong that every one was bound to have on hand only such furniture, clothing

<sup>1</sup> „Der übernehmenden Kopf ist nichts leichter als mit einem Spielzeug die Menschen an der Narrenseile herumzuführen, wie dieses bereits mehrere Male geschehen ist.“

<sup>2</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>3</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>4</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>5</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>6</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>7</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>8</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>9</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

<sup>10</sup> „Die Engländer etc.“ Vol. II, p. 395.

or linen as his needs required, so that it might be practicable to acquire new styles as they made their appearance. The interest in current events, real and imaginary, was a further indication of the presence of this trait in the character of the Londoner. "How rapidly news spreads here!", exclaims Forster.<sup>1</sup> "Fresh nourishment must be continually provided for this greedy animal with eight hundred thousand throats! Yesterday the King of Sweden died of bilious fever; today the Queen of Russia was assassinated; the Spanish have seized Jamaica, France is equipping twenty men-of-war. And again only reports of peace are heard throughout the city."

But regardless of all this the Englishman was considered preeminently a man of sound judgment and common sense, and unstinted was the praise of his intelligence and personal culture. With the present-day interest in spiritualism, of which England seems to be one of the strong-holds, the eighteenth century attitude presents a sharp contrast, if we may rely on the statement of Büschel:<sup>2</sup> "Nobody here concerns himself about departed spirits, nor about those which they wish to call back; . . . nobody stops to think about whether it is safe and expedient to go on occupying a room in which a relative or friend hanged himself the day before; for such considerations nobody has time, so great are the demands of work or pleasure."

It is not without significance that the Englishman, Lord Seymour, in Schiller's uncompleted novel, *Der Geisterseher*, is the rationalist whom it is impossible to deceive by the faked appearance of ghosts. This significance is somewhat emphasized by the fact that the characters in the story are of several different nationalities, and sanity of judgment is thus, in a sense, made an especial attribute of the English. In fact, Lord Seymour can scarcely be said to reveal any other distinctive traits than his rationalism and a decided proclivity toward swearing; and this, too, is undoubtedly to be taken as a mark of British nationality.<sup>3</sup> No doubt is left as to the

<sup>1</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Reisen*, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Frequent are the references to the profanity of the English. For instance, Lichtenberg (*Urtheile*, etc., *Vermischte Schriften*, Vol. II, p. 121); "If countries



opinion of Wendeborn:<sup>1</sup> "The almost total absence of coercion from English education is one of the main causes of the freedom of thought and action, and it is the chief source of the sound intelligence, or *bon sens*, which is met with more generally among the English than elsewhere. Parents and teachers can tolerate contradictions here, if it seems to be reasonable, and a tone of finality is less frequently heard here than abroad."

When Büschel came to consider the general intelligence of the English, his usually great admiration for them took on new warmth:<sup>2</sup> "The better acquainted I become here, the more I am associated with Englishmen, the more estimable they appear to me. . . . And the cause of this high esteem? I have found that every Englishman—no rank, no class, neither sex excepted—is in his way a thinker. What beneficent spirit has cast its blessing upon the inhabitants of this land and dispelled the demons which still tyrannize, if not whole nations, at least the souls of the masses? What flash of lightning has illuminated their understanding, while many of their fellow-men, though they think, to be sure, that they are walking in the sunlight, are still groping in the dark?" Büschel, in fact, all but forgot his loyalty to his own country in his praise of the English:<sup>3</sup> "Enlightenment, that idol of our men of letters, which we take such great pains to spread, which we often imagine we see where it is not, which we flatter ourselves we possess, loudly trumpeting the claim abroad; this divine gift we find here and, I might almost say, here alone. . . . Native common sense, freedom of thought, which, to be sure, often leads to impertinences, the pure, uncorrupted service of the Church of England, which does not promote or produce foolish conduct, and the education, are the indisputable sources of this rare and beneficent influence." Lichtenberg, somewhat more patriotic than Büschel, attempts a defense of his fellow-

were named from the words that are first heard [in them], England would have to be called *damn it*." See also Moritz: *Reisen*, etc., p. 135; and Heine: *Englische Fragmente. Sämmtliche Werke*. Hamburg, 1876. Vol. III, pp. 16-17.

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 244.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Reisen*, 11, 45.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

countrymen:<sup>1</sup> "I believe that the intelligence of the German, in comparison with the Englishman, is more stifled; and this is to be greatly deplored. The German, for instance, suppresses his laughter under certain circumstances simply because he knows it is the proper thing to do, while the Englishman does not laugh because he sees nothing amusing."

As to the general culture of the English people we have already heard much testimony, and still a great deal more might be presented. Archenholz, for instance, refers to England as the most cultivated nation on the face of the earth,<sup>2</sup> and Küttner writes:<sup>3</sup> "The longer I stay in England and the more general are my observations here, the more I must admire the remarkable civilization of the country and the culture of its citizens." From Taube also we hear in extravagant terms of the enlightenment of the English:<sup>4</sup> "Here it is a disgrace to be ignorant and to read nothing; in other countries it is often considered an honor. When a farmer, . . . tired out from his day's work, comes home, he takes up a new book and reads it so attentively that he is able to appreciate and intelligently discuss its contents; and the same is true of the English woman."

The Englishman's independence of thought, so striking to the foreigner, was often carried to the extreme of oddity. Every one was more or less a law unto himself, and the tendency seemed to be to exaggerate all natural idiosyncracies. Once more political liberty is held responsible:<sup>5</sup> "Another effect of their freedom is caprice and humor; and hence their disposition for extraordinaries and peculiarities, in which they sometimes run strange lengths." This idea is enlarged upon in the *Annalen der Britischen Geschichte*:<sup>6</sup> "The British spirit of liberty engenders many whimsicalities. These can not be held in check, so long as they are not contrary to the law.

<sup>1</sup> *Urtheile*, etc. *Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Annalen*. Vol. III, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntniss . . . von England*. N. A. d. B., Vol. II (1793), pt. 2, p. 612.

<sup>4</sup> *Abschilderung*, etc. Pt. I, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Toze's Present State of Europe*. Vol. II, p. 203.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. I, p. 402.



Conventionality, decorum, public opinion, all receive little or no consideration from people who take pleasure in following their own harmless inclinations. . . . The just or distorted judgment of other people, once it is placed against realities, can neither lessen nor increase the happiness of an intelligent, independent man; a happiness which—even if only imaginary—has for him far more reality than the one-sided, transient thoughts of many moralizers, which, when balanced against real, inner satisfaction, are found to be negligible. In no [other] country in the world is this philosophy practicable to such an extent as in England, and whenever the Britisher commits a strikingly singular deed, he confirms the great maxim: 'Man's own will is his heaven.'"

Many anecdotes illustrative of the whimsicality of the people are to be found throughout Archenholz' voluminous writings on things British. He tells, for instance, of an old lady who had her lap-dog buried as though it had been a human being:<sup>1</sup> "All her servants were required to form a procession to the grave, and, according to the custom at English funerals, they wore white gloves, black silk hatbands, crepe and other articles of mourning. She herself appeared in deep mourning, which she continued to wear for several weeks." Another case was that of<sup>2</sup> "the honorable Wortley Montague, brother-in-law to Lord Bute, who, when a child, ran away from his father's house to become a chimney-sweeper. . . . These fantastical actions," concludes Archenholz, "are very frequent in England, and they there pass under the denomination of *whims*." Another of Lichtenberg's interesting comparisons is relevant here:<sup>3</sup> "In England original characters are found in society and among the common people in greater number than in the literature. We, on the other hand, have a large number in the *Messkatalog*, few in society and in ordinary life and on the gallows none at all."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Annalen*, etc. Vol. I, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> *Urtheile*, etc. *Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. II, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> Separation from his native land seemed to accentuate the nationality of the Britisher. As a continental tourist he presented his worst side; far from adapting himself to the conditions of his new environment, he deliberately

The Englishman of the eighteenth century usually impressed the foreigner as being of a serious, frequently of a morbid disposition. He was still strongly under the influence of Puritanism, and his piety often bordered on fanaticism. Of this we hear from Goede:<sup>1</sup> "Among all the phenomena which surprise the foreigner in England, the piety of the nation, on account of its effects, remains by far the most remarkable. While in other countries religious indifference, now boldly, now disguised, appears in an honorable form, in England an orthodox fanaticism seems to gain steadily a stronger hold, and while among other nations philosophic Titans take Heaven by storm, the insane asylums of England are filled with those poor wretches who lose their minds in a convulsion of piety or in their zeal for a Christian dogma." This orthodoxy likewise made a deep impression on Archenholz:<sup>2</sup> "It is surprising that the enlightenment in England, which in the field of science has made such broad strides and dispelled so many prejudices, produces no appreciable change in the attitude toward religion and does not even weaken the adherence to old tradition. We must conclude that freedom itself, which admits of the public profession of every religious opinion, yields a phenomenon which in other countries violence to conscience, tolerance edicts, *auto-da-fés* and dragonades can not produce: true, pious, blind faith of every kind."

That the Englishman took his religion too seriously was not the opinion of Büschel:<sup>3</sup> "It is not the belief that this sought to appear as a unique character. Of this we hear from a nineteenth century writer: "The inhabitants of the insular country who visit the Continent distinguish themselves by their extravagant behaviour, and if an opinion were formed from them of the character, customs and manners of the English people, one would be justified in considering England a large lunatic asylum. At home it occurs to no sensible Englishman to distinguish himself by unusual attire or by conduct which would make him conspicuous in the company of his fellows. In London every cultured man is even more a slave of custom and etiquette than anywhere else, and whimsical personages are held in as much scorn and contempt there as in other countries (Von Weech: *Reise über England . . .* 1823-27. 3 Vols. in 2. München, 1831. Vol. I, p. 81).

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> *Annalen*, etc. Vol. I, p. 326.

<sup>3</sup> *Neue Reisen*, p. 48.

life must be given over to a preparation for the future life, but a part of it is devoted to the enjoyment of the present, and—still more important—no one is ashamed to admit this."

The tourist from the Continent was struck by the strict observance of the Sabbath. So great was the solemnity of the day that a foreigner on his first Sunday in England might easily have believed that some unusual event had made a deep impression on the religious feelings of the people, arousing a spirit of devout penitence.<sup>1</sup> This was a matter of such general knowledge as not to escape Berckenmeyer, limited as his acquaintance with things British was.<sup>2</sup> "The English are devout observers of the Sabbath: for in England it is not even permissible on Sunday to sell anything, to travel, to play, to sing secular songs, or to touch a musical instrument, unless one wishes to incur a heavy fine." Moritz was taken to task for his laxity by a twelve year old boy:<sup>3</sup> "When I began to hum in his presence some merry tune, he looked at me very thoughtfully and very much surprised and reminded me that it was Sunday. In order not to scandalise him I answered that the confusion incident to my journey had caused me to lose sight of the day." And thus a German clergyman perjured himself to spare the moral feelings of an English youth.

A causal relation between these remains of Puritanism and the seriousness of the British temperament is pointed out by Archenholz:<sup>4</sup> "The clergy and the laity who wish to pass for good Christians seem to think that abstaining from all work and worldly affairs on a Sunday entitles them to such denomination. This Judaical and popular custom is supported by a statute which was enacted when Puritanism was in full vigor and which has not a little contributed to that gloomy taciturnity which forms such a conspicuous part of the Englishman's character."

On no other point do we find so much difference of opinion as on this "gloomy taciturnity." In fact, it is not difficult to

<sup>1</sup> Goede's *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> *Neuenmehrer Curieuses Antiquarius*, p. 212.

<sup>3</sup> *Reisen . . . in England*, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 170.

find German writers flatly contradicting their own previous statements on this subject. Archenholz, for instance, after frequent allusions to the extreme gravity of the British,<sup>1</sup> writes in the *Annalen der Brittischen Geschichte*:<sup>2</sup> "It is a mistake to consider the British a sad nation. In no other European country are so many popular celebrations held as in England." In Toze we read of the English<sup>3</sup> that "their melancholy disposition makes them discontented and splanetic, though the latter be rather a distemper of the body than the mind, and sometimes terminates in suicide." And this, on the heels of the following statement:<sup>4</sup> "Good cheer is common among all ranks and a consequence of their happy situation and easy circumstances."

On the occasion of his first visit to France after the Revolution Küttner observed a marked change in the French people. He found them more serious and thoughtful and less polite and cordial to foreigners; in other words, there was more of *das Englische* in their character. This change was attributed in a large measure to the new form of government; in the opinion of Küttner participation in government affairs superinduced serious-mindedness:<sup>5</sup> "The gloomy, introspective, serious temperament of the Englishman, the silence that has become habitual with him, his indifference toward everything that does not directly concern him, his spirit of restlessness, his jealousy, his suspicion, have become proverbial; of all this the Frenchman will have his share, with the only difference, of course, which a more southern climate, purer air and lighter food will make." With the foregoing opinion we find Goethe in hearty agreement. The Englishman's melancholy views of life, attributable chiefly to his civic responsibilities, had far-reaching effects in Germany:<sup>6</sup> "Such gloomy contempla-

<sup>1</sup> See for example, *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, p. 438.

<sup>3</sup> *Present State of Europe*. Vol. II, p. 205.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntniss . . . von Frankreich*, p. 99.

<sup>6</sup> *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Th. III, Buch 13. Weimar ed. Vol. XXVIII, p. 212. The translation is that of Oxenford: *Autobiography of Goethe*. Revised ed. 2 Vols. London, 1897. Vol. I, p. 504.

tions, which lead him who has resigned himself to them into the infinite, would not have developed themselves so decidedly in the minds of the German youths had not an outward occasion excited and furthered in them this dismal business. This was caused by English literature, especially the poetical part, the great beauties of which are accompanied by an earnest melancholy, which it communicates to everyone who occupies himself with it. The intellectual Briton, from his youth up, sees himself surrounded by a significant world, which stimulates all his powers; he perceives sooner or later that he must collect all his understanding to come to terms with it. How many of their poets have in their youth led a loose and riotous life, and soon found themselves justified in complaining of the vanity of all earthly things? How many of them have tried their fortune in worldly occupations, have taken parts, principal or subordinate, in Parliament, at court, in the ministry, in situations with the embassy, shown their active cooperation in the internal troubles and changes of state and government, and, if not in themselves, at least in their friends and patrons, more frequently made sad than pleasant experiences! How many have been banished, imprisoned, or injured with respect to property! Even the circumstance of being the spectator of such great events calls man to seriousness; and whither can seriousness lead further than to a contemplation of the transient nature and worthlessness of all things?"

Pöllnitz found a melancholy temperament common to almost all Englishmen,<sup>1</sup> and Goede accepted their seriousness as inevitable:<sup>2</sup> "Among all nations which have, on account of the sanctity of certain ideas, continually held themselves to a uniform course, seriousness is deeply ingrained in the character." Here again Wendeborn dissents:<sup>3</sup> "Sadness and melancholy are said to be innate with the inhabitants of this island. I do not believe it. They are all pleasure-lovers, although everyone is guided in his choice of amusements by his own imagination and his own ridiculous whims. . . . The Eng-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, pp. 281-83.

lish have changed during the course of this century; one can no longer say that their blood is blacker and heavier than that of other peoples." Another German who found the English more cheerful, merrier and livelier than they were usually represented to be by tourists, was Heinrich von Watzdorf,<sup>1</sup> who visited England in 1784 and returned home to vie with Archenholz in singing that country's praises. And we might go on presenting testimony on both sides of this disputed case; but it would not alter our conclusion that the Englishman of the eighteenth century was regarded by his German contemporaries as being in general over-serious and frequently of a morbid, melancholy temperament. That this impression underwent some modification toward the end of the century is evident, due, it may be, to some extent, to such a change as Wendeborn thought he saw in the Englishman, but perhaps still more to a better acquaintance between the two countries.

This much talked-of melancholy resulted in suicide so frequently as to create the impression that life was held in comparatively slight regard in England. Throughout the voluminous *Annalen der Britischen Geschichte* we read numerous accounts of suicide, but its author maintained that this evil was quite as common in Paris as in London.<sup>2</sup> In 1727 Haller writes:<sup>3</sup> "Suicide is somewhat less common [than formerly], although these people, who go to extremes in everything and usually pay toll to folly at least once [der Narrheit einen Zoll abgiebt . . .], sometimes, on very slight pretexts, take their own lives; and nobody pays much attention to it." Especially baffling to Pöllnitz was this British propensity:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Briefe zur Charakteristik von England*, etc. Leipzig, 1786. A. L. Z., 1787, Vol. I, No. 4, section 30. Ten years later in the same periodical (1797, Vol. IV, No. 314, section 14) we again read a denial of the assertion that the English are of a sterner, gloomier disposition than people of other nationalities.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 177. Such was not the belief of Wendeborn, who observed that the French *émigrés* in London and Hamburg made the best of their unhappy circumstances. . . . "The Englishman would perhaps have resorted to a pistol or a rope, where Frenchmen, singing, awaited better times" (*Erinnerungen*. p. 299).

<sup>3</sup> *Tagebücher*, etc., p. 129.

<sup>4</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 292.



"'Tis one of the distinguishing characters of an Englishman to be intrepid in the matter of death. We are forbid by religion to approve of that contempt of life, yet we can't help admiring it in the Romans, from whom the English have no doubt derived the practice of putting an end to their days, when life is a burden to them. These self-murders are but too frequent here and are committed by persons of good families, as well as by the dregs of the people. . . . You must agree with me in the impossibility of accounting for such a strange, odd turn of mind in these people, for, in short, other nations don't seem by their action to have any more religion than the English, and they are equally sensible to misfortunes; yet one rarely hears of a foreigner making an attempt on himself."

The depressing climate of England was not without its effects on the people. Lichtenberg tells us what was to be expected of them on gloomy days:<sup>1</sup> "The Englishman draws his overcoat collar over his nose and slinks along, lost in his whims; some prophesy, others mend their ways and others shoot themselves. . . . Lucky is he who, under such a heavy sky, has a clear conscience and is not in love, at least not with bad prospects; otherwise he cuts his throat, as did Lord Clive, shoots himself, as my neighbor did recently, or hangs himself, as a pretty young girl of sixteen did last Saturday." But Volkmann looked elsewhere for an explanation of the frequency of suicide. Courage and contempt of death, in his opinion, were erroneously taken as the causes:<sup>2</sup> "Would it not be more reasonable to hold the customary education responsible? A man who, from youth up, has been unaccustomed to hold his desires in check and who is without any religious principles, as is unfortunately most often the case in England, easily reaches the determination to end a discontented life." More frequently do we encounter views on this point similar to those of Büschel.<sup>3</sup> According to him, the prospect of being hanged did not check the robber in his thefts; almost daily he saw some companion strung up, and

<sup>1</sup> *Briefe*. Vol. I, p. 204. Jan. 10, 1775, to Baldinger.

<sup>2</sup> *Neueste Reisen*. Vol. I, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 65.

he came to look upon such an exit from the world simply as being less painful than a natural death. Therefore it had no terrors for him. "In addition there is the general inclination of this people toward melancholy, the contempt of life which has already, in a moment of despondency, armed many a good Englishman against himself, leading him to take his own life almost without knowing why."

There seemed to be no decrease in the number of suicides toward the end of the century; on the contrary, we learn from a letter written September 18, 1796, to the *Merkur*<sup>1</sup> that the evil was becoming more prevalent, and that the debating societies of London were giving it their attention in their discussions of the serious problems of the day.

<sup>1</sup> November, 1796. p. 315.



## CHAPTER VII

### INDIVIDUAL BRITISH TYPES

The wholesomeness and the frank, open nature of the English youth created on the foreigner a very favorable impression. The freedom which the Englishman enjoyed, even from early childhood, was sometimes held accountable for a sort of wildness and savagery in his nature—a sort of Storm-and-Stress element—but this, if it appeared at all, was usually a transitory fault which was overcome in early manhood. “The English youth,” as he appears to Goede,<sup>1</sup> “is characterized by charming candor and ingenuous good-cheer.” Even in the small child the beneficent effects of English environment are apparent to Moritz:<sup>2</sup> “Despite the growing mania for new fashions, one remains true to nature here up to certain years. What a contrast when I think of our six year old pale, pampered Berlin boys with their large hair-bags [Haarbeutel] and the full dress of an adult, their suits perhaps even trimmed with lace, and, on the other hand, of the vigorous, slender, robust boys with bare throat and closely cut, curly locks, that are seen here! Very rarely do we encounter here a boy or a young man with a pale complexion, misshapen features and badly proportioned limbs. With us the contrary is really something unusual; otherwise, handsome people would not be so striking.”

The spirit of independence is seen to advantage in the English youth. Of this we learn from Wendeborn:<sup>3</sup> “In England the constitution—as well as the people—is, above all, for freedom. The country boy feels it, and he is told that he is free. A cringing respect for the great and the rich is not instilled into children so much as in other countries. . . . The

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. I, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> *Reisen . . . in England*, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 240.

strictness is by no means comparable with that which is found in other countries. It is my belief that many Englishmen pass through the years of childhood and youth without ever receiving blows." From the same source we have an enthusiastic eulogy of the young Englishman:<sup>1</sup> "I have on many occasions made the observation that a young Englishman, regardless of his apparent wildness and rusticity, when he approaches his twenty-fifth year, becomes more restrained [sittsamer] and knows how to demean himself with a frankness and good grace for which we often search in vain among young men of other nationalities. He usually holds to a happy medium between the affected frankness and the empty politeness of the French, and between the carefully studied bearing and the awkwardness which many Germans—even those who consider themselves people of culture—betray in their intercourse." Not less admirable does the youth appear to Küttner:<sup>2</sup> "Generally speaking the English boy possesses in a high degree good-nature, a sense of fairness and love of justice, and he acquires in the English schools, above all else, those social virtues which have most influence on every-day life and the absence of which is the cause of the greatest part of human misery. . . . The strictness with which the laws are enforced, especially in the public schools, accustoms him, in the course of time, with all his love of freedom, to a punctilious observance of the laws." And especially generous is the tribute of one Hüttner to the younger sons who left home, often as early as their eleventh year, to go to sea:<sup>3</sup> "It is astonishing how different the English boy is here from those of other nations; he is not in the least embarrassed or homesick, and it is very seldom that he becomes puffed up over this independence. With a hearty *good-bye* he shakes the hands of the friends he is leaving and is as happy on the unfamiliar element as in the cultured home of his father, surrounded by all that makes life attractive."

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Beiträge . . . von England*. N. A. d. B. Vol. XXIV (1796), pt. 1, p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> *Der Neue deutsche Merkur*. July, 1797, p. 222. (From an essay, "Ein Paar Züge zum Gemälde des brittischen Seemanns," pp. 219-237.)

Thoroughly compatible was the character of the young Englishman with the demands of the Storm and Stress dramatists. To the Englishmen in their plays they give a full measure of the "apparent wildness" to which Wendeborn refers, and an even more fiery nature than the average youth of their creation possessed. A striking example is Robert Hot, the hero of Lenz' *Der Engländer*, who reveals something of his vehemence at the very *out-break* of the play: "Ah! what would one not do for you, Armida? It is cold. Yet an eternal fire is burning in this breast. I glow as if before a smelting furnace, when I raise my eyes to that red curtain. There she sleeps, there she is slumbering right now, it may be. Oh! to be the pillow that cradles her cheek!" Not without significance is the fact that the play which gave its name to this entire movement in German literature, while its scene is in America, is peopled with Englishmen, and all of them, even to the sexagenarians, Berkley and Bushy, are constantly at fever-heat. None of the others, however, quite come up to the temperature of La Feu, who, despite his name, is a native Londoner:<sup>1</sup> "I am in love again throughout my whole body, in my veins and bones, in my entire soul. I am so hot I fear I may blow up like a bomb—and then if my pure being might only be elevated and lodge itself in the charming lady's bosom!"

Of such high-spirited youths it is to be expected that they should be good soldiers, and such was the case, as all German writers attested. The most essential quality of a good soldier, fearlessness of death, the Englishman was said to possess in a high degree. "Vor dem Tod zittert der Engländer nicht," says Büschel;<sup>2</sup> and similar was the testimony of many Germans both before and after his time. Pöllnitz, for instance, writes:<sup>3</sup> "Here wounds go for nothing, and death itself is but little dreaded. I fancy the English are descended from Mutius Scaevola, because like that Roman they despise pain." Likewise, Wendeborn:<sup>4</sup> "Courage is also a characteristic of

<sup>1</sup> Klinger. *Sturm und Drang*. Act III, Scene 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 303.

<sup>4</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 275.

the English, but this they possess in common with other peoples. Yet it is probably safe to assert that they surpass others in that they have the least fear of death. Of this the battles and naval combats of the English are sufficient proof."

While the Englishman was invariably pronounced a good soldier, he was said to require more urgently than the soldier of other nations good food and favorable living conditions. "The English are good soldiers, especially when well provided for and soon brought to action," writes Busching,<sup>1</sup> the geographer. And likewise from Achenwall<sup>2</sup> we hear that "the Englishman serves equally well as cavalryman and as infantryman, but he insists on being well paid and well fed."

By Volkmann and Wendeborn we are told what to expect should the English find themselves lined up against the Prussians. "Their soldiers," according to Volkmann,<sup>3</sup> "are in the first attack fiery and brave, especially when they have good fare; but the free Englishman can not be forced to take orders, so it is not likely that they could hold out in the long run against a Prussian army." Similar was the view of Wendeborn:<sup>4</sup> "Of the English troops it may be said in general that they are courageous and are good soldiers, especially when they have good food and drink. . . . From what I saw there [at a review of English troops] and have seen in Prussia, I am inclined to conclude that a number of English troops would not hold out long against an equal number of Prussians, although the English in their national pride consider their troops the best in the world."

The British Navy could not fail to arouse general admiration even in the eighteenth century. To Volkmann<sup>5</sup> "the brave deeds of the English at sea are proofs of their courage, of their valor and of their contempt of death." Though prompted by no rivalry between Germany and England, Busching takes the pains as early as the middle of the century

<sup>1</sup> Busching, A. F. *Neue Erdbeschreibung*. Hamburg, 1769-1773. Part II, Vol. II, p. 1297.

<sup>2</sup> *Staatsverfassung*, etc. Pt. I, p. 358.

<sup>3</sup> *Neueste Reisen*, etc. Vol. I, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 86.

<sup>5</sup> *Neueste Reisen*, etc. Vol. I, p. 31.

to present a definite estimate of the sea-strength of the British:<sup>1</sup> "The English Navy was scarce ever in a better condition than at present, insomuch that no state in Europe has anything like it. The reader must necessarily be astonished to find that in the year 1748 the naval strength of Great Britain consisted of two hundred and forty-five men of war from the first to the sixth rates, or from one hundred to twenty-four guns, fifty-five sloops of war, nine bomb-vessels, five fire-ships and seven yachts." That English sailors excelled those of other nations was the belief of Wendeborn,<sup>2</sup> and this he held to be due to their obedience, a virtue which, as we have just seen, Volkmann denied the free Englishman.<sup>3</sup> "Whenever I have been on German, Dutch or English ships, I have observed the visible effects of education even upon seamen. If the English sailor is ordered by the captain to climb the mast, the captain has scarcely ceased speaking before the sailor has thrown his hat and wig—if he is wearing them—on the deck and is already half way up the mast; the German or the Dutchman, on the other hand, first takes a good while to fasten his hat or cap securely on his head, to button up his jacket and to measure the height of the mast a few times with his eyes."

No German who wrote of the English sailor could have known him better than did Hüttner, since he was himself three years in the British Navy. He maintains that<sup>4</sup> "if the Britisher is really what he himself believes he is in Europe—and what we other nations so often scornfully deny—his sailor is particularly worthy of our attention." This writer goes on to praise the manliness of the youthful Britisher who gave up all the comforts of a luxurious home to go to sea, where he was subjected to the severest discipline and suffered without complaint every kind of hardship. This trying life, while it was not always beneficial to his morals, instilled into

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Erdbeschreibung*. Part II, Vol. II, p. 1297 (The passage quoted is from the anonymous translation of an earlier edition than the one referred to above, *A New System of Geography*. 6 Vols. London, 1762. Vol. III, p. 251).

<sup>2</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 194 (footnote).

<sup>3</sup> *Der Neue deutsche Merkur*. July, 1797, p. 220.

him above all the greatest pride in personal bravery and the most profound reverence for the traditions of the navy.<sup>1</sup>

To the English nobility Georg Forster refers<sup>2</sup> as "the nobility of the first land in the world, a nobility to which merit invariably paves the way." Public spirit and generosity were commoner virtues among British noblemen than among those of other countries, and they were honored especially for the patronage they gave to the arts and sciences and for their philanthropy. Furthermore, as Wendeborn reminds us, they could count among their own number many men of sound and lasting intellectual attainments.<sup>3</sup> "It is no little honor to the English nobility that so many among them have distinguished themselves as scholars, as authors, as patrons of the muses. The names of a Lord Bacon, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Burlington, Pembroke, Orerry, Littleton, Pomfret, Chesterfield and of many others are familiar enough in the realm of the arts and sciences."<sup>4</sup> But this writer, following the universal tendency to hark back to the good old days, felt obliged to add that in his own time England could boast of no such illustrious names, for the nobility had become more absorbed "in dressing fantastically and in attending shows, mummeries, chases, horse-races and similar amusements."

As to the pride of the nobility Wendeborn likewise has some

<sup>1</sup> A certain custom, on account of its inconsistency with British ways in general, was quiet incomprehensible to the German; namely, the empressment of seamen. Wendeborn is one of many who discuss it: "A group of ten or more sailors known as a press-gang, armed with large clubs and hunting knives go, under the leadership of an officer, through the streets and often into taverns and disorderly houses and, without more ado, seize those whom they consider fit to become sailors. . . . I know of no way in which this empressment of seamen is to be reconciled with the boasted freedom of the English." (*Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 91.) Johann Peter Hebel makes this the motif of a short story, "*Merkwürdige Schicksale eines jungen Engländers*" (*Bibliothek der deutschen Klassiker*, Vol. X, p. 678, ff.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> A half century later Friedrich Raumer writes: "The significance of the English aristocracy appears in a very different light when I see the halls adorned with Raphael's and Titian's masterpieces rather than with receipts for interest paid on mortgages." (*England*. 3 Vols. Leipzig, 1842. Vol. II, p. 156.)

interesting observations:<sup>1</sup> "Among the English nobility pride is encountered again and again, but far less than abroad among people of similar rank. . . . Abroad, those of the nobility who are attached to courts are outwardly more affable, more polite and more disposed to unconstrained intercourse than those who pass their life remote from large cities. Here in England it seems to be the reverse. The majority of those who have to do with the court and of those who belong to the party which happens to be at the helm of the government are proud and often as haughty as any little local tyrants in other countries can be; on the other hand, the noblemen and aristocrats who have not much to do with the court and do not often come into contact with it, are sociable, affable and polite and seem to forget in their intercourse with those who are lower in the social scale, that their own birth has placed them in a higher position." The natural deduction from all this is that the eighteenth century Englishman, when left to himself, was more democratic than the average European.

So advantageous did certain features of the English system of nobility appear to Justus Möser that he wished to see them introduced in his own country. In his essay, *Warum bildet sich der deutsche Adel nicht nach dem Englischen*,<sup>2</sup> he commended these features to his fellow-countrymen. In the status of the younger sons of noble parentage he saw the chief point of superiority in the English system. Such young Englishmen were at liberty to follow any pursuit whatever, since they belonged only potentially to the nobility, but were in reality of the gentry; whereas in Germany each son was a nobleman and was required to maintain the traditions of the nobility. The proposed plan is summed up in two points:<sup>3</sup> (a) "The nobility and in general all servants of the crown are in no event to engage in trade or business. (b) But those [merely] of noble birth may do so without compromising their right of succession to a noble title [Adelsfähigkeit]. And so we would be on the very road which the English have made their high-

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Patriotische Phantasien. Sämmlliche Werke*. Berlin, 1842-43. Pt. IV. pp. 236-247.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 241.

way. One does not lose his *Adelsfähigkeit* there by seeking to earn his bread in any honorable way; one chooses this, another, that course; and it is by no means unusual to find the eldest brother in the upper house, the second in the lower house and the third in the stock-exchange. He who does not actually hold a noble title [Kronwürde] is deprived of all the privileges of nobility; he ranks no higher than another, but is honored simply as a man who may, either by heredity or by royal appointment, attain to a title of nobility."<sup>1</sup>

One German tourist who had no praise for the English nobility was Riem.<sup>2</sup> He characterized them as lazy, indolent, haughty and thievish and was of the opinion that princes would be fully justified in having the "low, slavish rabble of nobility which creeps around their throne like poisonous vermin and soils the glory of the most splendid crown, driven by bailiffs and catchpolls to all the devils." But this is a tirade against noblemen in general rather than against the English exclusively. Nor did Jean Paul exclude other nationalities from a share in the qualities he suggested as characterizing the English lord in his *Hesperus*.<sup>3</sup> "He regards mankind as an apparatus for experiments, as so much hunting-gear, war-material, knitting-work: such men look upon heaven only as the keyboard to earth and the soul as orderly-sergeant of the body; they carry on wars, not for the sake of winning crowns of oak-leaves, but to secure the oak soil and the acorns; they prefer the successful man to the deserving one; they break oaths and hearts to serve the state; they respect

<sup>1</sup> But even in England the problem of the younger sons was serious enough, if we may rely on the inexhaustible Wendeborn: "For money and positions they will do anything, and their dependence on the government always makes of them dangerous enemies of the freedom of the people. He who has received an education (as the unhappy phrase goes) conformable to his rank, he who has been accustomed from his youth up to all fashionable follies and excesses, will consequently, in order to live in conformity with his rank, do anything to obtain money and to continue his life in idleness and sensuality." (*Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 43.)

<sup>2</sup> A. L. Z. 1800. Vol. IV, No. 300, section 162.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Paul's *Sämmtliche Werke*. 34 Vols. Berlin, 1861. Vol. V, pt. 1, p. 206. The translation is that of Charles Q. Brooks: *Hesperus*. 2 Vols. Boston, 1865. Vol. I, p. 235.



poetry, philosophy and religion but as means; they respect riches, statistics of national prosperity and health but as objects; all they honor about pure Mathesis and pure female virtue is the transformation of each into impure for manufactures and armies; in the higher astronomy all they care for is the transformation of sums into odometers and way-marks for pepper-fleets, and in the most exalted *magister legens* they seek only an alluring tavern sign for poor universities."

As the democracy of the English prevented the nobleman from losing touch with the people, it likewise elevated the commoner to a higher level than that on which he stood in other countries, so that the continental visitor was struck with the absence of the sharp class distinctions to which he had been accustomed. "In England," writes Goede,<sup>1</sup> "the ideal of the gentleman is common to all classes. No occupation, no trade ostracizes a man, alters his social status, or deprives him of recognition." Archenholz calls attention to the effects of political liberty on the lower classes:<sup>2</sup> "It is not according to our ideas that we ought to calculate the space that separates the different classes of men in that monarchico-republican government. This observation extends even to servants. The first man in the kingdom is cautious of striking his domestics; for they may not only defend themselves against him, but also commence an action in a court of justice. . . . Those will be much deceived who may from thence imagine that an English footman will consequently be impertinent. On the contrary, I am convinced that no part of Europe abounds with better domestics."<sup>3</sup> This writer would have us believe that

<sup>1</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. II, p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> A striking contradiction of this statement is presented by Weisse in his *Freundschaft auf der Probe*. The play is an adaptation of Marmontel's *L'amitié à l'épreuve* (*Oeuvres complètes*. Paris, 1818. Vol. IV. *Contes Moraux*. pp. 145-195), and the only character in Weisse's play who does not figure in the original story—nor does he appear in the English version, Hugh Kelly's *Romance of an Hour* (London, 1774)—is Woodbe; this servant may be taken, accordingly, to represent truly a German conception of his class. His impertinence knows no bounds; he does not hesitate to press his suit for Corally's hand as the rival

the intelligence of the English, of which we have already heard much, was shared even by the lowest classes;<sup>1</sup> "It has been observed that the common people in England are more intelligent and judicious than in any other country. The free and unrestricted manner in which they speak and write on every subject is the real cause of this. One is astonished to hear some of the very lowest of the populace reason concerning the laws, the right of property, privileges, etc." Another to touch on this point is Goede:<sup>2</sup> "Common craftsmen as a class not only appear more prosperous in England than in other countries, but also betray in their whole exterior a far higher degree of culture. How refined is the speech of the English craftsmen! How eminently respectable do they appear in their domestic life! Particularly apparent is their culture in their relations with dependents. Every foreigner who has an opportunity to see how politely the masters treat their apprentices and workmen, will have to confess that this relationship could not be more dignified." Yet this tourist did not overlook the fact that there was an element of the people which did not share the virtues common to the nation as a whole.<sup>3</sup> "It is certainly not to be denied that patriotism and public spirit find unmistakable expression even in the poorest class of respectable citizens; but among the English populace, the dregs of the nation, not the slightest trace of such qualities is to be perceived. This wild horde of barbarians has no native land; they are blind to the privileges of English citizenship."

Of the leveling effects of democracy we hear from Wendeborn:<sup>4</sup> "Here the common man thinks about a great many things pertaining to social duties, justice and other things of Lord Nelson. At one time he interrupts a  *tête-à-tête*  between Corally and Lord Nelson and says to the latter: "I beg your pardon. I had forgotten for the moment that you still represented the master of the house." (Act I, scene 6). But Woodbe was encouraged in his insolence by his master, Blandford, who says to him: "Out with it! You know that I like for my servants to be frank." (Act II, scene 6.)

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. I, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *England, etc.* Vol. II, p. 344.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 365.

<sup>4</sup> *Zustand, etc.* Vol. II, p. 287.

that influence the happiness of life just as clearly as the scholar and the man who considers himself a philosopher in other countries. Hence the prejudice of rank has little weight here. . . . Hence people who think that their honor is injured, or that they are not paid sufficient respect, are not heard, as in many other countries, to exclaim: Such an aristocratic, wealthy man as I! Such a noble, honorable or wise gentleman! No, the most aristocratic Englishman knows that his fellow-countrymen are, like himself, free, that they have human intelligence and that they think; hence an English general who returns home at the end of a successful campaign is quite as unassuming as before; hence a Lord Clive, who saw Moguls and Nabobs humble themselves before him and who in the Orient was a despot, was in England nothing more than another Englishman; and he before whom India bowed, saw himself compelled to humble himself before his fellow-citizens, for he knew very well that they did not think as East Indians."

The impression made on foreign visitors by English extravagance was discussed in connection with a consideration of economic conditions in England.<sup>1</sup> Especially striking to Schütz was the lack of concern on the part of the laboring class for the future:<sup>2</sup> "Nowhere [else] does the common man know so little about economy as in England. The seamen, for instance, who sail on the Thames receive good wages and, to judge from their appearance, are prosperous people, yet most of them beg when the Thames is frozen over. In Germany the common man is distinguished from the aristocrat by his means of subsistence, but in England there is no difference with respect to bread, other provisions or even amusements. The seaman on the Thames wears just as fine clothing and just as fine linen as the peer of the kingdom. So it is no wonder that the common man must suffer want when his income stops." Anyone accustomed all his life to the thriftiness of the German people could not have failed to note the relative lack of this virtue when he visited England, but that even there examples of the utmost frugality and the most careful economy might be

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 28, ff.

<sup>2</sup> N. A. d. B. Vol. V (1793), pt. 1, p. 279.

found was the experience of Georg Forster on his travels through Gloucestershire:<sup>1</sup> "A woman of this region who was traveling with us, pointed out to us several farmers of her acquaintance who live by the roadside and who have a yearly income of four or five hundred pounds sterling. But they wear very rustic clothing, tend their cattle and feed it; their wives and daughters milk and make cheese. Many farms in this region have seventy or more cows, and in a family of ten children only one maid is kept. The residences of the country people in this province have a mean, neglected appearance and are by no means in keeping with their wealth."

When the German tourist undertook to record his impression of the English woman, he was seldom at a loss for something to say. Her reputation for beauty seems to have been well known in Germany, and almost without exception her charms were found to exceed the visitor's highest expectations. Berckenmeyer does not altogether overlook the fair sex in his *Curieuse Antiquarius*; already he saw the beginnings of woman suffrage:<sup>2</sup> "In England the woman loves freedom to such an extent that she often contests with men for rule. And the over-great adoration which they enjoy on account of their beauty, has given rise to the proverb, 'England is woman's paradise.' . . . On this account the Italians are accustomed to say: 'If there were a bridge across the English Channel, all the women of Europe would run over.'" On the authority of Pöllnitz we have it that a great many Englishmen "hang themselves purely for love. I own to you," he confesses,<sup>3</sup> "that if I were so forsaken by God as to commit such a foolish prank, it should be for an English woman. They have in my opinion such an air of modesty and good-nature and withal such a bashful simplicity as charm me, and such tender, languishing eyes, too, as tho' not universally pleasing, yet captivate me to such a degree that if I was but twenty years of age, I should have gone much astray. Most of the English women are handsome; they have the finest hair in

<sup>1</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 394.

<sup>2</sup> p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs*. Vol. III, p. 293.

the world and are only obliged to pure nature for the beauty of their complexions. . . . They say that among the good qualities of the women here, they are equally susceptible themselves of the passion of love, which they are so apt to kindle in the men. This is very good and perfectly natural; for in my opinion nothing is so ill becoming to the fair sex as hard-heartedness."

No German writer seems to have been more susceptible to the charms of the English woman than was Lichtenberg. Upon his arrival in England two things, above all, attracted his attention:<sup>1</sup> "The swiftness, readiness and accuracy with which everything desired is done; and the large number of pretty girls. Even the most ordinary of them are so pretty that anyone who can not fully trust himself on this score must stay away from England. They know how to enhance their beauty by their dress; in such attire the most ordinary German servant-girl would appear pretty."<sup>2</sup> In a letter to his friend, Johann Christian Dietrich, Lichtenberg is still more outspoken in his praise:<sup>3</sup> "As soon as he sets foot on English soil (provided, of course, that he has something more than feet) the student, as well as the philosopher and the book-dealer, is immediately struck by the extraordinary beauty of the women, and this impression becomes gradually stronger the nearer he gets to London. For the man who is not quite sure of this side of his nature, I know but a single course; Let him take the next packet-boat back to Holland; there he will be out of danger. I have seen a great many beautiful women in my day, but since I have been in England I have seen more than in all the rest of my life together, yet I have been in England only ten days." That he was far from complimentary to the women of his own country Lichtenberg was somewhat painfully aware; he lays upon his friend the following injunction: "Meanwhile, I forbid your inserting

<sup>1</sup> *Bruchstücke aus dem Tagebuch*, etc. *Vermischte Schriften*. Vol. III, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> With this opinion Pöllnitz did not concur: "They are commonly very richly dressed, but not altogether in the taste of the French ladies, which is the only fault I find with 'em. They seem to affect dressing to their disadvantage." (*Memoirs*, etc. Vol. III, p. 293.)

<sup>3</sup> *Briefe*. Vol. I, p. 11—London, April 19, 1770.

this report on English women in the *Gothaischer Calendar*, not on my account, but on account of German women. The ladies of Lima may be praised to them quite freely, but the English woman is somewhat too near to them. We read in history that the Saxons once invaded England in great numbers. Very profound political causes have been given by way of explanation, but this is quite unnecessary; the good Saxons were running away from their wives. But not a word of my description in the *Calendar*!"

Not less ardent was the enthusiasm of Archenholz:<sup>1</sup> "Of all the remarkable objects which England offers to the eye of a foreigner, no one is more worthy of his admiration than the astonishing beauty of the women. It produces such a surprising effect that every stranger must acknowledge the superiority of the English ladies over all others. The most exact proportions, an elegant figure, a lovely neck, a skin uncommonly fine and features at once regular and charming distinguish them in an eminent degree." Especially charming did English women appear to Büschel when they indulged in one of their chief amusements, riding on horse-back.<sup>2</sup> "With an indescribable grace they ride horse-back. Every one who has a sense and appreciation of the beautiful will be ready to agree with me that his heart leaps with joy whenever he sees a beautiful Englishwoman in her riding habit, with high, waving plumes on her hat, riding by as lightly and carelessly as if she had never done anything else."

It was Wendeborn's opinion that the women of England well deserved the reputation of being more beautiful than those of any other country.<sup>3</sup> Nor was this all he could say on their behalf:<sup>4</sup> "I must say to the credit of the English women in general that they are good mothers, that most of them love cleanliness, that they have a compassionate heart and that they have by no means either the affectation or the stiffness of bearing that we meet with so frequently elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of England*. Vol. II, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 304.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 306.

They are more natural, and, accordingly, more pleasing and captivating."

But we are not to believe that the foreigner was altogether blind to the Englishwoman's faults.<sup>1</sup> Even Berckenmeyer has some rather harsh criticism.<sup>2</sup> "In two respects English women openly violate good form; first, they go driving and to wine-taverns with men whom they scarcely know; secondly, they smoke tobacco." Nor was Hassel, who wrote toward the end of the century, altogether complimentary.<sup>3</sup> "Women play the leading rôles at the faro-tables, ride like postillions and go driving with four horses and long whips." And we even find one German who was unwilling to acknowledge that English women surpassed all others in beauty—but he wrote anonymously.<sup>4</sup> "I can not see in them the great and universal beauty of which other tourists have so much to say. In comparison with the women of Italy how different they are in figure and coloring; and with those of France, in pleasant, natural bearing and in dress.—But there is here a certain type of beauty," even this dissenter admits, "which I have found nowhere else; one sees many girls with a very fair complexion and red hair which is so brilliant that its beauty cannot be denied. Such were the girls, doubtless, whom our forefathers once honored as the greatest beauties." From Forster we hear the following adverse criticism:<sup>5</sup> "Few people are able to assume dignity without giving themselves the appearance of coldness and disregard of others; and her dignity the English woman must maintain above all things, even at the cost of falling into the most intolerable prudery." That the average woman did not attempt to measure up to very strict intellectual requirements may be deduced from what Küttner writes:<sup>6</sup> "A learned woman is so little sought after and esteemed in England that the wealthier and wiser

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Wendeborn (*Zustand*, Vol. II, pp. 310-313).

<sup>2</sup> *Neuvermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius*, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup> N. A. d. B. Vol. II (1793), pt. 2, p. 326.

<sup>4</sup> *Teutscher Merkur*. May, 1785, p. 192 (Letter from London, March 25, 1785).

<sup>5</sup> *Ansichten*, etc., p. 397.

<sup>6</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von England*. A. L. Z. 1797. No. 384, section 572.

ladies of intellectual attainments attempt to conceal their knowledge. If it is said of a woman, 'She is a blue-stocking,' half our sex is frightened away from her."

One practice was found to be strikingly out of keeping with the high position of women in England; namely, that of disposing of a wife who had ceased to be a desirable member of the family. Of this practice Archenholz cites numerous examples. In his *Annalen* we read:<sup>1</sup> "Never was the sale of wives so common as now. Scenes of this kind, formerly so rare, are now becoming very common. On the market-place at Oxford a workman, Hawkins, sold his wife to a man for five shillings; he led her, as usual, by a rope which he held in his hand until he had pocketed the money; then he gave the rope to the new husband, wished him much happiness and went his way. A similar scene occurred in Essex, where a man sold his wife together with two children for half a crown. The ceremony was accompanied by music, and the mother had to march three times around the market-square at Matching-Green with the rope around her neck."

Of the provincial Britisher as distinguished from the Englishman proper—that is, in most cases, the Londoner—we do not learn a great deal from eighteenth century German writers. They freely employ the term *der Brite*, it is true, but ordinarily it does not seem to have with them a different connotation from that of the term *der Engländer*. The foreigner's impressions of Great Britain were based largely on his acquaintance with the life of the capital; in fact, London seems to have received as much of his attention as all the rest of the kingdom combined. That such a restriction of the field of observation did not preclude the possibility of forming an accurate opinion of the people is convincingly maintained by an anonymous writer in the *Neues Göttingisches Historisches Magazin*.<sup>2</sup> "I flatly deny the assertion heard so often in Germany that London is not the place to become acquainted with the customs and character of the English. Anyone who becomes extensively acquainted comes to know people from all counties

<sup>1</sup> Vol. V, p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, pt. 1, p. 194 (Letter from London, March 12, 1791).



of England who live in the city quite in the same way as they lived previously, or as they still live during the summer in the country. They themselves maintain that they are even less hampered in London than on their country estates." But the tourist did not fail to note a contrast between the Londoner and the provincial:<sup>1</sup> "The farther we go from London into the country, the purer we find the air and the customs. The people become more polite, more affable and more sociable. Wealth and extravagance are less in evidence, although the inhabitants of the country, almost everywhere, seem to enjoy contentment and the fruits of a noble freedom."

A number of the German *Reisebeschreiber* extended their travels throughout Great Britain, but when they made a brief tour of Scotland, Ireland or Wales, they were more attentive to the physical appearance of the country than to the peculiarities of the people, and, in fact, had little to say about either the one or the other.<sup>2</sup> When we take up, for instance, Goede's substantial work on *England, Wales, Irland und Schottland* we very reasonably expect to learn what at least one German thought of each of the four British countries, but we are disappointed to find that the entire five volumes, with the exception of the last two chapters of the fifth, are devoted exclusively to England. At length, in the last chapter but two [Vol. V, p. 316] we come to Wales; and we do not reach Ireland until the last page of the book. Scotland is a promised land to which we are not admitted; this country appears in the title, apparently, only to produce a balanced effect. On the Welsh, however, Goede presents some interesting comments:<sup>3</sup> "If he [the tourist in Wales] expected simply to go into another province of the same country, he is astonished to find himself among a foreign people which appears in language, physical characteristics, customs and manners in sharp contrast with the English. This is true,

<sup>1</sup> Wendeborn: *Zustand*, etc. Vol. II, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> This complaint is made, for instance, of Volkmann, who is "very brief and meager concerning Wales, but," his critic claims, "through no fault of his own. Surprisingly little has been written about this country, although it is much toured." N. A. d. B., Vol. II (1793), pt. 2, p. 611.

<sup>3</sup> *England*, etc. Vol. V, p. 317.

however, only of the lower and middle classes in North Wales.<sup>1</sup> People of rank and fortune in these regions are said to be distinguished from the English by nothing save the virtue—much rarer among the latter—of hospitality. But it is not to be denied that the common people of North Wales in comparison with the English are in a very much lower state of civilization. That spirit of profitable enterprise, which finds its chief delight in the ideal of domestic prosperity, of civic honor and independence and which secures to helpless old age the enjoyment of well-earned tranquillity, has not yet penetrated from England's blooming plains into these mountains." This tourist noted a striking contrast in temperament between the two sexes:<sup>2</sup> "The men of North Wales appear rather lazy and phlegmatic than active and lively; the women, on the other hand, are very animated and talkative."

Wendeborn found British credulity somewhat intensified among the Welsh.<sup>3</sup> "I have seen many a Welshman, or native of Wales, who became quite indignant, if it were doubted that in his native country there could be seen at night funeral processions starting out in regular formation from the house in which someone was to die a few days later." Another quality which, in the opinion of Küttner,<sup>4</sup> the Welsh possessed in a higher degree than other Britishers, was that of pride: "The Welsh are very proud and consider themselves far superior to other Englishmen, whom they look on as an ignoble mixture of Saxons, Danes and Normans." As to the appearance of the people, Küttner writes:<sup>5</sup> "The Southern Welshman has a distinctive build. All the country people are short and stout and have full faces radiant with health, and blooming, cherry-colored cheeks. Yet they seem to have less animation than health; on the contrary, there seems to be something dull and serious about them."

<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere Goede broadens this assertion on the authority of others: "I have seen none of the largest Welsh cities, but I have been assured that from them the traces of Welsh nationality have almost entirely disappeared, having been replaced by English customs and manners." (*ibid.*, p. 359.)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 363.

<sup>3</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. III, p. 384.

<sup>4</sup> *A. d. B.* Vol. CX (1792), pt. I, p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

bearing on the foreign opinion of things German<sup>1</sup>—the German public took the deepest interest. It was clearly recognized that the new doctrines found much more fertile soil in Scotland than in England, but even in the former country, according to one German who was on the scene, the reception of Kant was none too enthusiastic:<sup>2</sup> “Although Scotland has much in common with Northern Germany, even in the mental attitude of the people, still I found one great difference. Scotland must have something objective, something substantial, if it is to go into raptures over a new school or a new dogma; the German, on the other hand, as gudgeons and other voracious fish, snaps at every bait, even if it be only a shadow, provided the thing have the appearance of something adventurous or new.”

The intellectual culture of Scotland was assigned a high place, though Archenholz, like Toze, reminds us that<sup>3</sup> “the state of civilization in the Scottish mountains has never been—and is not yet—at all comparable with the civilization in the plains of this country; so that there prevails among the Highlanders a roughness bordering on savagery.” Very high rating was given to the seats of learning. Büsch saw great similarity between them and the German universities and declared that they stood in even higher esteem than the latter.<sup>4</sup> On Wendeborn, too, they created a very favorable impression:<sup>5</sup> “In so far as I know the Scotch universities, they turn out at present, in proportion to the number [of students], far better trained men than those of England, where so many years are required to obtain a rather pedantic and monkish education and which the majority leave, when their hair is beginning to turn gray, without having become extraordinarily learned. The young people enter the Scotch universities far better prepared than the wild boys who go from the Episcopal schools of England to Oxford or Cambridge.” In this writer’s opinion the clergymen of Scotland also surpassed those of

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 45 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Merkur*, August, 1798, p. 399 (Letter from Edinburgh, June 8, 1798).

<sup>3</sup> *Annalen . . . des Jahres 1793*. Vol. XI, p. 341. Hamburg, 1795.

<sup>4</sup> A. d. B. Vol. LXXIII (1787), pt. 1, p. 228.

<sup>5</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. IV, p. 342.

England:<sup>1</sup> "The Scotch clergy is very different in character from the English. In liberal knowledge as well as in everything that goes by the name of theology they are, at least at present—especially in the case of the latter—very superior; and for twenty years Scotland has been able to point to more famous authors among its divines than England." Furthermore, as we learn from the same source,<sup>2</sup> "the preachers in Scotland are more polite, more sociable and more affable in their intercourse than the majority in England. They are hospitable, but their income necessitates their living somewhat frugally." Still more striking, though of an altogether different nature, was the contrast between the Irish and the English clergy. The prebends in Ireland were especially liberal, and members of the leading Irish families filled the more important offices of the church.<sup>3</sup> "An Irish bishop continually reminds us of his worldly title (prince and duke), takes part in all the pleasures of life, goes riding early in the morning with the party of which he happens to be a member, drinks in the afternoon at *toast* as the others and plays [for stakes] in the evening with the rest of the company. The Englishman, on the other hand, is serious, reserved, more guarded in his conversation, full of ecclesiastical dignity."

Although the praise for English women usually exhausted the German's stock of superlatives, there was one contributor to the *Merkur* whose belief it was that the women of Scotland were even more generously endowed by nature:<sup>4</sup> "Scotland, what beauties it has! How Ossian in his time sang of the fair maiden of his love, of the blush of spring in her cheeks! Even today how great is the astonishment of the Englishman—who certainly has beautiful countrywomen—when he goes to Scotland!" Ireland likewise was said to rival England in this respect:<sup>5</sup> "The Irish girls and women are quite as pretty as

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> Küttner's *Beiträge . . von Eng.* N. A. d. B. Vol. XXIX (1797), pt. 2, p. 411—Küttner's *Briefe über Irland an seinen Freund, den Herausgeber.* Leipzig, 1785. A. L. Z. (1785), Vol. III, No. 154, pp. 8–12.

<sup>4</sup> March, 1788. p. 332.

<sup>5</sup> *Göttingisches Historisches Magazin.* Vol. I (1787), pt. 1, p. 158.

the English, but much more vivacious and more skilled in dancing, drawing and conversation."

Ireland—even more than Wales and Scotland—was a country seldom visited by foreigners,<sup>1</sup> and it is extremely doubtful if any continental Europeans were sufficiently well acquainted with the Irish to form an accurate opinion of their character. The general impression was that they were an easy-going, care-free, irresponsible people—"Der Irländer folgt des Glückes Stern"<sup>2</sup>—and the lower classes, in particular, were considered extremely indolent and perhaps even more uncivilized than was really the case. This nation Berckenmeyer dismisses with the following learned observation:<sup>3</sup> "The belief is that the Irish of the present day are either thoroughly good or totally depraved and that the bad ones could not possibly be worse nor the good ones better." A slightly more plausible view-point is reached by Toze:<sup>4</sup> "Among the Irish there is rather greater difference than among the Scotch. Some have admitted the English laws and customs, and these are civilized and well-behaved people; but the others retain their old customs and ways; which, not being without some mixture of barbarism, are by the English known by the appellation of Wild Irish."

In the first issue of the *Göttingisches Historisches Magazin* we read:<sup>5</sup> "The common man is indolent in the extreme and quite addicted to drunkenness; nowhere are beggars more numerous or more impudent than in Dublin." And in the *Merkur* for July, 1797,<sup>6</sup> we read that it is doubtful if there could be a more abandoned populace than that of Ireland, and as for Irish seamen, they are termed "an undisciplined gang of abominable blood-hounds."

From Nemnich we have a view of the economic situation in Ireland as he found it at the end of the century:<sup>7</sup> "According

<sup>1</sup> A. d. B. Vol. LXV (1786), pt. II, p. 493.

<sup>2</sup> Schiller: *Wallensteins Lager*, scene II.

<sup>3</sup> *Neuermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius*, p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> *The Present State of Europe*. Vol. II, p. 207.

<sup>5</sup> Vol. I (1787), pt. I, p. 157.

<sup>6</sup> p. 288.

<sup>7</sup> *Neueste Reise*, etc., p. 607.

to many accounts Ireland possesses in various regions the most valuable mineral products. But the yield from these sources is almost negligible. There is in the first place a lack of necessary fuel and of sufficient capital. Furthermore, it seems that a spirit of enterprise and industry is less prevalent than laziness and frivolity; or perhaps the oppression has as yet allowed nothing of the former kind to come to light. Everything that is undertaken or promoted on anything like an extensive scale is usually backed by Scotchmen or Englishmen who come over with speculations and money; of which the former often miscarry and the latter is entirely lost."

No early improvement of these conditions was anticipated by Wendeborn.<sup>1</sup> "The Irish people are inert, for the most part in abject poverty and so accustomed to oppression from the aristocracy of their own country that it will require at least a half century and ten Swifts to awaken them from their lethargy, to make them see their own interests and take advantage of the rights which nature conceded them and which . . . were ratified by the British Parliament."

<sup>1</sup> *Zustand*, etc. Vol. I, p. 215.

## CONCLUSION.

The foregoing pages establish above all one fact; that eighteenth century Germans in general had marked admiration for everything English. With the single exception of Andreas Riem, who is in every respect an anomaly, no German visitor to England seems to have escaped altogether the general anglomania. On the one hand Wendeborn enjoys the distinction of having resisted most successfully the prevalent blindness to British failings, and on the other, Büschel in his anglomania goes to the greatest lengths; according to him, the very name *England* was music to German ears.<sup>1</sup> Baron Riesbeck, who attempted to palm off his *Travels through Germany* as a French work, in spite of his French disguise presents—and represents—the usual German attitude.<sup>2</sup> "I was not surprised to find the present war much the subject of conversation throughout the whole of my tour. The nation take[s] a natural concern in it, both on account of the troops they let out and from their having been several centuries very war-like themselves. No wonder that under such circumstances more than a hundred newspapers should not be sufficient to satisfy their hunger after news. But what I cannot readily explain, is the amazing partiality of the Germans for the English. You hardly meet with one German out of a hundred who is on our side. The Mecklenburghers especially have a fondness and veneration for our enemies that approaches superstition. I was in many places where they gave little fêtes whenever the god with two trumpets, one before and the other behind, spread reports favorable to the English. It is true indeed that there is something great in the heroic deeds and character of the English which leads the opinion of mankind towards them."

<sup>1</sup> *Neue Reisen*, etc., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Riesbeck, Johann Caspar: *Travels through Germany*. (Maty's translation.) Vol. III, p. 73.



On certain points the unanimity of opinion is striking. It may be worth while to sum up the most important of these and to call attention again to certain others, which, though sometimes bones of contention, at least come in regularly for the consideration of eighteenth century German writers on England. Without exception the tourists were favorably impressed by England's economic prosperity, by the fertility and natural beauty of the country, by the good roads, the splendid horses and carriages and the comfortable inns—*English comfort* is a frequently recurring phrase which the writers confess their inability to express in German. There were just two objections to the inns, both of them rather serious, it must be admitted; the food was, at first, not to the foreigner's liking, and both landlord and servant made the heaviest demands on his purse. Great was the newcomer's delight, however, at the expediency and efficiency with which everything was done; nothing, in fact, was more remarkable to Lichtenberg than this. Hotel proprietors, shop-keepers, manufacturers, made every effort to please the public, and, though the complaints of profiteering were frequent, it was the source of no little satisfaction that the man whose means were not too limited could have his every demand fulfilled. And London, despite its unattractive appearance, seemed to have peculiar charms for German visitors; at any rate, they never tired of the city's varied life. As for the English themselves, they appeared to enjoy a higher degree of physical well-being than people of other nations; even the paupers were not entirely excluded from the advantages of the general prosperity. The Englishman was usually described as of attractive appearance, well-groomed, a stickler for cleanliness in dress and surroundings and, in the upper classes, at least, a slave of fashion.

In the cultural life, the universal interest in everything that concerned the national welfare was observed by all tourists of discernment. It was found to be easier to engage an Englishman in conversation on politics than on any other subject; in this one field even the man of the most marked mental limitations showed surprising intelligence. To most



German visitors, especially to Albrecht von Haller, the English form of government seemed admirable. The position of the King—free to benefit but not to harm his people—was usually regarded as ideal; and the rulers were praised for their modesty and lack of ostentation. In their visits to Parliament, it must be said, German tourists were frequently more attentive to externalities than to the questions under discussion and the methods of solving the problems of government; only those who resided long in England were able to arrive at a real appreciation of the political life. As to the advantages of the legal system, there was little difference of opinion, although the view was frequently expressed that the death-sentence was too freely imposed, that the most trivial offences were punished with the same severity as the most horrible crimes. In the field of religion, it was English tolerance that made the deepest impression on the foreigners, who also on this point seem to be well agreed.

For the educational system, particularly for the universities, the praise was scant, though Scotch universities were held in somewhat higher esteem than those of England. But despite this, all writers agreed as to the high state of learning in nearly all branches; intellectual culture was said to be more general and to extend much further down the social scale in England than elsewhere. For English literature enthusiasm had become almost unbounded by the last third of the century, but in none of the fine arts were the English admitted to be leaders, unless landscape-gardening be elevated to the dignity of a fine art. For leadership in this field England was given full credit not only in Germany, but all over Europe. Englishmen of means were praised for their liberality in promoting all efforts toward the advancement of the arts. Accordingly, though creative genius was rare, England's contribution to art was considered quite notable.

Unmitigated praise was given to the home and family life. Around the home everything seemed to center; the Englishman was above all else a domestic creature. The relationship between parents and children, though it struck the casual observer as being rather cold and formal, was usually described

as ideal. Children were encouraged at an early age to think for themselves and were allowed to learn the lessons of life, as much as possible, from their own experience. But despite the freedom they enjoyed, they were generally respectful of parental authority. It was frequently observed that parents seldom found it necessary to resort to corporal punishment in rearing their children, even among the lower classes; the same condition did not prevail in Germany, if we may rely on such authorities as the clergymen Moritz and Wendeborn. That the English were hospitable toward their own people is not questioned, but it is certain that the foreigner was none too hospitably received. Germans who were very much at home in England—for instance, Georg Forster and Lichtenberg—attempt to refute this charge, but all writers mention the Englishman's indifference toward foreigners and his inclination to hold in contempt everything of foreign origin. Even to such admirers as Haller, Zimmermann and Goede the English appear too self-centered and provincial to appreciate the merits of other peoples.

In the individual Englishman the most marked traits—those invariably recognized—were the love of freedom and the national pride. The former, an inevitable outcome of democracy, led to a disregard of public opinion, which, in extreme cases, prompted an exaggeration of personal peculiarities and a studied attempt to appear odd and whimsical. At the same time this freedom was the source of the Englishman's self-reliance and independence of thought, for which the foreigner could not fail to admire him. As for the national pride, the visitor would have been blind indeed who failed to observe it. *The proud Briton* was a very common phrase, as it still is, with German writers. They did not, however, consider the Britisher personally vain, but more or less justly proud of his nationality; and this trait they held up to their fellow-countrymen for emulation. It was from the English that Germans learned many of their early lessons in patriotism.

Of the virtues of the British none was more frequently mentioned than their benevolence and generosity, as manifested in part by the numerous charitable institutions and

societies for the relief of the needy. The use which was made of wealth was, in fact, frequently held to redeem the commercialistic spirit and greed for gain with which the English were charged.

As to the frankness and honesty of the Britisher German writers were likewise agreed. The frankness frequently amounted to a repelling brusqueness, but in the long run it won the commendation of all. That the Britisher was fair and honest in all his dealings was universally recognized; nor was he so from policy, but rather on account of his high sense of honor. Archenholz comments on the abhorrence of hypocrisy, and Moritz makes the significant observation that the Englishman considered it the greatest possible insult to be called a liar. That the British were more courageous than other peoples was likewise a general belief; on account of their bravery the Scotch, especially, were said to be excellent soldiers. The fortitude with which the condemned man underwent his sentence and the frequency of suicide were often taken as proof of an unusual fearlessness of death.

Not infrequently was the Englishman branded as merciless and cruel. That such an opinion had long been prevalent on the Continent is established by the fact that various writers, including Pöllnitz and Bielfeld, who visited England in the first half of the century, took pains to refute it. The opinion was based chiefly on two points: the severity with which the death-sentence was executed and the enthusiasm, especially among the lower classes, for brutal sports and amusements. These points were not to be explained away, but the individual, as always, was found to be superior to the mob, and this cruelty, like a number of the other faults commonly attributed to the Britisher, was generally regarded as no inherent part of his nature, but rather as a thing of the surface, which arose from environment and tradition.

One side of the Englishman's nature which is discussed by all visitors is his lack of sociability and his melancholy temperament. There is no doubt that he usually impressed the foreigner as being cold, reserved and over-serious. Especially general was this impression early in the century. Later on,

as the result of better acquaintance, this view underwent an appreciable change. Those Germans who were best acquainted with the Englishman, such as Forster and Küttner, found him as sociable and warm-hearted, once the cold exterior was penetrated, as any other man, and all agreed—notably, Wendeborn and Volkmann—that it was well worth while to cultivate the Englishman's friendship, for, once acquired, it could be relied upon through thick and thin.

Above all else there was one important underlying characteristic of British life that won German admiration—the devotion to nature, the consequent naturalness and the comparative lack of artificiality. Here Wendeborn is the leading German exponent of English culture; his writings teem with admiration for this aspect of the national life, and in this he is by no means alone. On every hand the principle manifests itself. As for English landscape-gardening, Volkmann speaks of it as “the art of converting every spot into a beautiful portrait of nature.”<sup>1</sup> In his restricted praise of the Englishman's educational system Wendeborn describes the chief merit as follows:<sup>2</sup> “He loves nature, he will not allow art to destroy any of her works. This very trait is the cause of the Englishman's attaining most nearly to the real . . . destiny of man.” In regard to literature Goethe exclaims:<sup>3</sup> “Nature, nature! what is more nature than Shakespeare's plays?” And it was through its imitation of nature that English literature made its chief appeal to the German mind. Again we hear from Wendeborn, regarding the women of England:<sup>4</sup> “They are more natural [than those of other countries] and, accordingly, more pleasing and captivating.” About the social life, too, there was little artificiality, and this was likewise the subject of favorable comment,<sup>5</sup> though Forster is to be mentioned here as an important exception. In short, in all the relations of life the English appeared natural—another result of their

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> “Zum Shakespeare's Tag.” *Werke*. Weimar Ed. Vol. XXXVII, p. 130.  
See above, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 134.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 61, ff.

political freedom—and for this the Germans had the strongest admiration.

The extravagant esteem for England was simply the most pronounced symptom of a malady common to eighteenth century Germans, that of an excessive admiration for everything foreign and a pronounced tendency to discredit native achievements—a malady to which the English certainly were not subject. Many Germans were well aware of this failing; Lichtenberg, for instance:<sup>1</sup> “No [other] nation appreciates so fully the merits of foreign nations as the German; and on account of this very flexibility it is held by most in light esteem. Methinks the other nations are right; a nation that strives to please all earns the contempt of all. . . . At present we know the scoundrels of England [die Spitzbuben der Engländer] better than they know our scholars.” And Küttner says of his fellow-countryman:<sup>2</sup> “He gives the preference to a thing merely on account of its being foreign. Many an English work has found applause in Germany that is scarcely known over there, and many a foreign author stands in high favor in Germany who at home has little recognition.” It was against this attitude that Klopstock directed his famous protest:<sup>3</sup>

Nie war gegen das Ausland  
Ein anderes Land gerecht, wie du!  
Sei nicht allzugerecht. Sie denken nicht edel genug  
Zu sehen, wie schön dein Fehler ist!

And again he fulminates against this excessive appreciation of foreign countries:<sup>4</sup>

Verkennt denn euer Vaterland,  
Undeutsche Deutsche! steht und gafft  
Mit blöder Bewundrung grossem Auge  
Das Ausland an!

. . . . .  
Dem Fremden, den ihr vorzieht, kam's  
Nie ein, den Fremden vorzuziehen;

<sup>1</sup> *Urtheile und Bemerkungen. Vermischte Schriften.* Vol. II, pp. 120–21.

<sup>2</sup> *Beiträge zur Kenntnis . . . von Frankreich*, p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> Klopstock, F. G.: “*Mein Vaterland*” (1768). *Sämmtliche Werke.* Stereotyp Ausgabe. 10 Vols. Leipzig, 1844. Vol. IV, p. 215.

<sup>4</sup> “*Ueberschätzung des Auslandes.*” (1781) *ibid.*, p. 255.

Er hasst die Empfindung dieser Kriechsucht,  
Verachtet euch,  
Weil ihr ihn vorzieht. . . .

To anyone who has followed the course of this investigation, observing the high esteem in which Germans held everything British and the absolute lack of reciprocation on the part of the English, the sentiments of Klopstock seem altogether natural and his protests fully justified.



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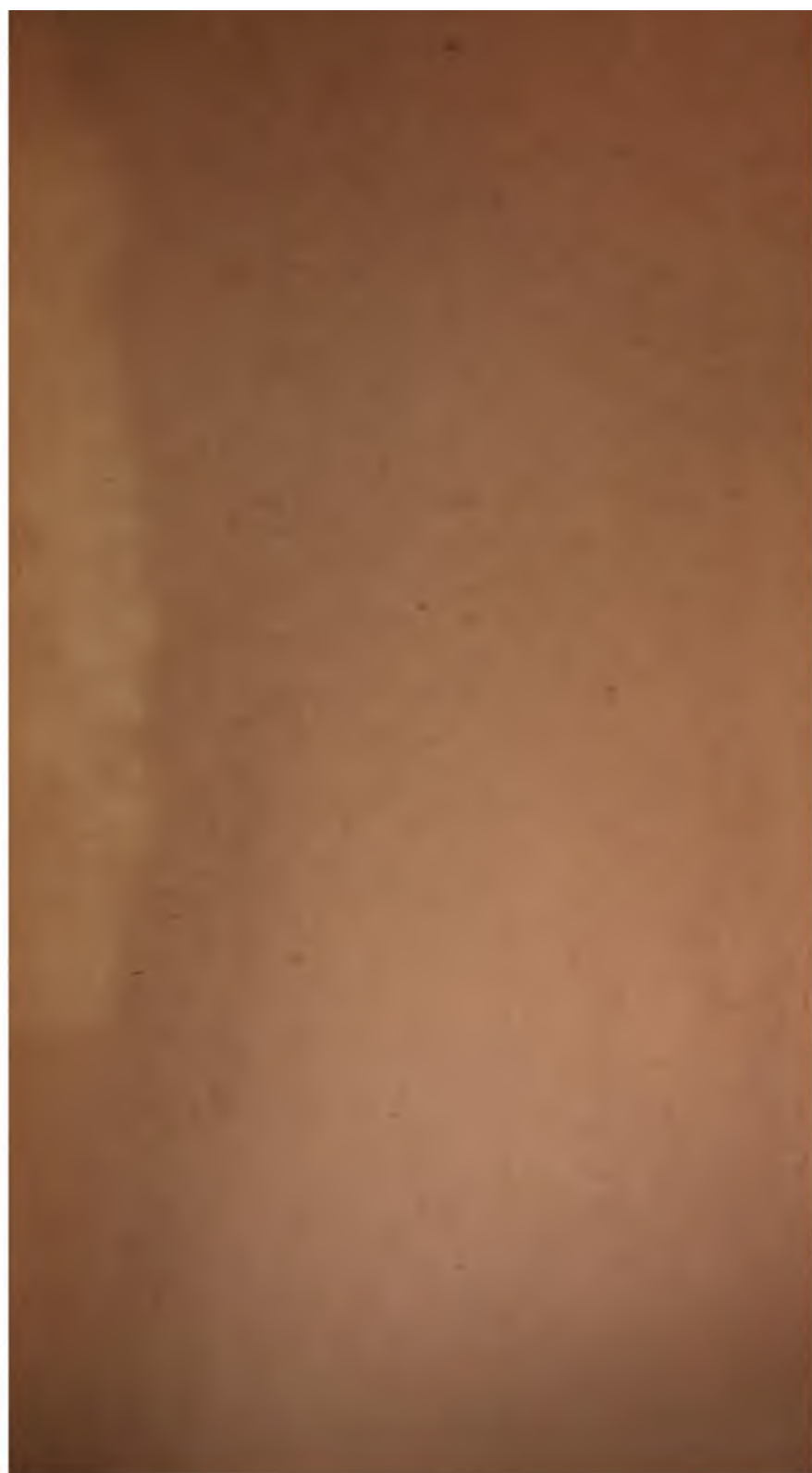
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